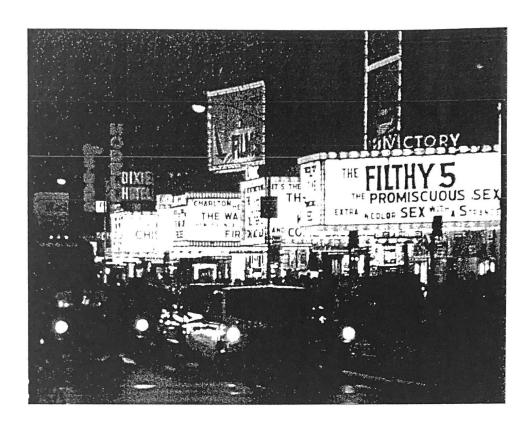
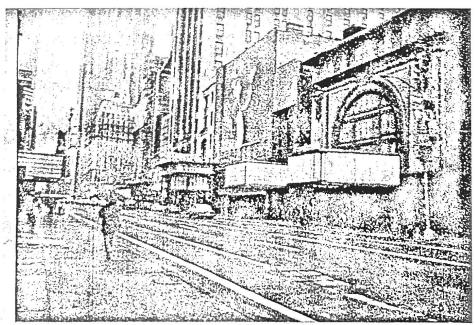
30 YEARS ON THE DEUCE THE WICKED DIE SLOW



By Bill Landis



THANK YOU:
Michelle Clifford, who's always been my best collaborator
Wyatt Doyle
Paul Gaita
Willie Sanders
John Le Moss



(Photo of the Deuce's last days by Michelle; cover photo by Michelle)

30 YEARS ON THE DEUCE: OR THE WICKED DIE SLOW

An anthology of solo pieces by Bill Landis/introduction by Bill Landis

I always wanted to be a journalist. Or a movie star or director, but journalist seemed to be the most feasible option. Since I was 12 I was typing my own movie reviews, even obsessively making three carbons of them.

Early on, the Godard movie *Alphaville* would play late at night and Lemmy Caution – the spy/journalist protagonist played by Eddie Constantine – became one of my personal heroes. Lemmy documents a brainwashed future run by a giant computer, with his handy Kodak Instamatic to capture key images. After 9-11, citizens being put on a plethora or mind-bending drugs which help them not to feel, and the advent of the internet, it remains one of Godard's most prophetic movies.

Age wise, I was an anomaly – I had been skipped two grades and was a high school senior when I was 16. The most enjoyment I got out of high school, and the extracurricular activity I enjoyed the most, was my film column called "Bill Landis' Footlight Parade". Even then, I was trying to experiment with different formats. I did one on "Buddy Movies" in which I combined *Papillon*, the obscure 70s comedy *Your Three Minutes Are Up* and *The Sting*. I also reviewed some movies that were out of the norm for your typical NYC borough high school kid like Alain Rensais *Stavisky*.

One thing I always enjoyed seeing was the girls in my classes read my reviews. It was an early way I could connect with the opposite sex. I got a charge out of them looking at my work. It was form of exhibitionism – and certainly a healthier one than I would be enmeshed in during my early to midtwenties. There were girls who were merely social with me, who also worked on the newspaper, and the flirtatious ones that just peered over my column and kept exchanging glances with me. Including the cute booster who sat next to me in English and had to do a little Crumb/Stanton leg and foot wrestling persuasion under the desk to let her cheat off me on the exams; At the end of the year I got a very sweet note, uncharacteristically shy note in my yearbook from her after our months of erotic push/pull.

One shenanigan truly boosted my popularity. One issue of the high school newspaper did nothing but ridicule the teachers and the principal. It was quickly banned. I was in the office where there were stacks of them. It was my first contact with a "banned" publication – and from early on – I never believed in any censorship. It was spring out and I had a sweater over a shirt a nerd would wear. At the instigation of my friend Fredda Levinson (who also had been skipped a year, and was an aspiring psychologist – our photos are next to each other in the yearbook, and we look considerably younger than everyone else, almost like brother and sister) – she said "Bill, grab all the newspapers you can and stuff them under that unseasonably warm sweater." She was already crossing her bare legs in a short denim skirt as she gave this command. I instantly followed suit; how could I resist? The next day I distributed all the copies to my closest friends, including her.

I won an award for journalism from the local paper and it was my aspiration to take it in college. However, my parents were big on stepping on my dreams. They were footing the bill for NYU and had some delusion I was going to be some sort of financial whiz. I attended NYU, where I quickly

realized that classrooms were auditoriums holding 300 plus people. Why bother to go? I just took the tests.

Like every urban escapist I was lured to the neon playground of Times Square, sometimes seeing nine movies a week. Euroleaze. Hard and soft core porn. Giallos. Kung fu. Celebrity crime. Fetish. Horror, long before the emphasis in special effects and the ghoul as the merchandising tactic. By the time I was 20 I had hit every grindhouse on the block, some still with opulent features like three balconies, opera seats and chandeliers; some run down and grungy right off the bus terminal. My horny young self also haunted some area adult bookstores, especially for bdsm and catfight material of the Eric Stanton school; and plainly extreme and anomalous material, some of them even bootlegs of old Henry Miller texts from Marvin Miller's Greenleaf press. There was nothing that escaped my eye or presence in Times Square, even the really dangerous adult bookstore on 50th and 8th where, appropriately, a murder scene in *Cruising* was filmed.

By 1979 I had completed an accelerated BS-MBA program which was useless in terms of my life. It wasn't anything that interested me. The first job I had was at a utility called American Electric Power, which was straight out of The Drew Carey Show, and, sure enough, ended up moving to Columbus, Ohio. The good thing about that job is I didn't do much there.

I moved out of my oppressive parents' apartment with only a suitcase in summer 1980 to a small but sprightly room at the George Washington Hotel on 23rd Street and Lexington Avenue. With only a borrowed manual typewriter at my disposal, I got a foggy notion: document every sort of critically reviled or ignored movie that played Times Square. Call the periodical *Sleazoid Express* (as its original D/B/A says the name was a concatenation of "sleaze" and "celluloid").

Initially *Sleazoid* came out every other week. The first issue, June 10, 1980, reviewed Doris Wishman's *Let Me Die A Woman*, her seamy transsexual documentary at the Anco Theater, one of the area's skuzziest grindhouses, right opposite the Port Authority Bus Terminal. I made note that the second feature – *The Seven Brothers Meet Dracula* – the first kung fu vampire movie, a co-production of England's Hammer Films and Hong Kong's the Shaw Brothers – was worth checking out;. *Humanoids from the Deep* and *Piranha* served as that weeks' horror mediocrity. There was a brief, unfavorable review of *Mad Max*. I couldn't stand the Australian accents badly dubbed into English.

Time changes. (Twenty years later, my erstwhile partner Michelle Clifford and I were asked to write Doris Wishman's obit for Lincoln Center's august film publication, Film Comment.)

In the early days of *Sleazoid* everything seemed to happen at once. It was written up by the now defunct **Soho Weekly News**, who also gave me a column reviewing the trash films that played Times Square. I also sold my first cover story to them: an interview with Kenneth Anger, which later provided the germ of the biography on him I co-wrote with Michelle. I held screenings of classic exploitation movies at venues like Club 57, the Mudd Club and Danceteria. There seemed to be too few hours in the day. Naturally I knocked heads with the old guard like Jonas Mekas who had a snotty film student make people wait for hours to see Warhol's *The Chelsea Girls*. Instead, we had Ondine present and made it a party atmosphere at Club 57, where the crowd was filled to beyond capacity. Recently Mekas told New York Press that "I don't remember this Landis guy."

After the one page format became too restrictive, I got the Warholian concept of expansion. Sleazoid was printed on 11 by 17 paper - folded over, with each mid section devoted to a different genre or impresario – transsexual movies being one, Jerry Gross and his Cinemation Industries being another.

By 1982, the corporate world had enough of me and vice versa. I had lasted the longest at American Electric Power simply because there was little to do, but then they did make their move to Ohio. I was only making about \$18,000 a year there. I spent a miserable 5 month stint at Merrill Lynch where I made \$22,000 as a computer programmer. Frankly, even in early 80s NYC, these salaries were piss poor, barely enough to live on, and I was always glad I was able to spin two or three other dishes to earn more. Merrill Lynch was particularly disgusting. It required unpaid overtime (which I always refused) with the carrot dangled of a bonus, and the office conditions were was straight out of *Brazil*. I didn't even have my own cubicle, but shared a desk with five other guys. Predictably, there was a plethora of sour faces when no one got the mythical bonus. I left there on a days notice and caught the infamous *I Spit on Your Grave* at the Anco later that evening. Finally, I spent four months at Con Ed, the obnoxious Manhattan utility and had them fire me so I could collect unemployment. The unemployment rate I earned was marginally less than the salary I collected there after taxes.

I held a benefit at Danceteria which was my last big hurrah at the NYC club scene. Well documented in the Kenneth Anger bio, it featured a ¾ master video of *Blood Feast* at the upstairs lounge, clips and product reels from Herschell Gordon Lewis' *The Wizard of Gore* on a malfunctioning projector with no sound downstairs. Loud throbbing Eurodisco filled the auditorium where a tripping Ken Anger complained the music was "too loud" and bolted, leaving the audience with a coughing and sneezing John Waters reading his chapter about William Castle "Whatever Happened to Showbiz" which was eventually featured in *Crackpot* and the obnoxious auteur of *Bloodsucking Freaks*, Joel M. Reed, who seemed quite peeved that Anger had fled after some smart alecky remarks by me, ending their potential future scamming partnership.

Soon, it was a question of needing a steady income pronto, and I took the deep plunge into Times Square vice, not knowing what the outcome of it would be. I wound up staying for four years. The first place I ended up working off the books at the ghastly Moulin Rouge aka The Night Shift aka The Omega all male theater, then moved on to crazier days at the Avon Chain, which had been around since the 1960s, and finally ended up at the severe and often life threatening chain of theaters named after Greek Gods on 8th Avenue. At this point *Sleazoid* became less of a film journal than a personal look at my Odyssey through vice.

Some of the articles you'll find here are pieces from *Sleazoid* that are among the most infamous but are virtually impossible to find, having sold out in their very first runs. You'll also find articles from *Swank*, many of my best pieces from *The Village Voice* and various interviews – the original cover piece on Ken Anger from *The Soho Weekly News* and the brutally frank *George Payne Superstar*, the talk with the adult film star known for his sadistic roles which was recorded live at the Doll Theater box office when I was managing it and he was playing the heavies in Phil Prince's Avon movies.

Most of my collaborations have been with my partner and wife Michelle Clifford, who breathed a second wind into *Sleazoid* in 1999 and turned it from a newsletter into a full monograph. Michelle encouraged it to be as wild and kinky as imaginable, with no restrictions on nudity and explicit sex.

She also edits her own monograph, which focuses more on the Times Square vice world, *Metasex* to which I've made various contributions and occasionally acted as muse (check out the last inside page of *Metasex #1* for a look at a picture of a rather familiar fellow from Eric Stanton's Taschen book, *Dominant Wives and Other Stories*). Michelle had noticed "someone familiar" in the book and the Stanton catalog I subscribed to. I always got Stanton's catalog but when I worked for him I was told it was strictly a "private patrons" deal. I was quite flattered to receive it as an Xmas present in 1999, let alone have my image reproduced for posterity in *Metasex*.

However, this is a collection of Bill Landis solo pieces, although there are bits of suggestions from Michelle throughout certain articles. The piece for the *Voice*, Sleazy Does It aka Sex Square describes how we got together and is also the predecessor to the piece we collaborated on for the *Village Voice*, Body for Rent

Before you read on, here's the background and an explanation of each piece and how it came into being:

Sleazoid Express Vol. 4 No. 1 - Early Summer 1984 - this issue, from its cover fragmenting every sort of pornography available on the Deuce, to its "Deep Fried Streets of Sin" main piece, was a walking, living, breathing tour through Times Square at its last height in the mid 80s, and became one of *Sleazoid's* most popular and sought out issues.. It describes everything from the once opulent grindhouses, which supplied the majority of the movies reviewed in *Sleazoid*, to remnants of the shoebox adult theaters, like the Doll on 47th Street and 7th Avenue, which I was managing at the time. All manner of pornography which was available in adult bookstores was meticulously cataloged.

Anomalous books that appeared in these twisted kiosks were *The Secret Life of Robinson Crusoe*, which is largely devoted to Crusoe's bestiality adventures before he meets Man Friday; *The Queen*, with its "get you Mary" characterization coupled with a plot insanely funny plot that one wondered if it was penned by Terry Southern; a book about castratos called *Men Without Stones*, and *Le Petomaine*, the biography of a Frenchman who gave fart concerts.

The piece brought *Sleazoid* a great deal of attention – inspiring Kurt Loder to document it in Rolling Stone, which contained a photo of me wearing a Joker T-shirt in an adult bookstore. (The story later appeared in his book Bat Chain Puller.) Film Comment gave it the lofty praise that it came across like "Joyce describing Dublin." Screw magazine liked it so much that they serialized it into a two piece story.

Both descriptive pieces caught the eye of my later partner and wife, Michelle Clifford, who was at the time an 18 year old glamazon residing in Ft. Lauderdale. Soon enough we were corresponding and talking on the phone. Today everyone is a NET perv.. It was a lot more fun in the days before the net of meeting someone that was of a physical distance but shared your same kinks and quirks, that you'd gradually reveal through passwords.

The story in this issue, **Dollhouse**, was a look at the daily grind of managing Avon Theaters' shoebox adult theater, the Doll, which I referred to as the Lounge as I was still employed there. It's, therefore, a bit of a *roman a clef*. Steve the projectionist was a mild mannered little Percodan addict named Danny Zinamon ("rhymes with cinnamon"), who ended up being the last union projectionist who worked Times Square down to its closing in the mid 1990s. Most of the theater workers or live

show teams were into hard drugs, and Danny didn't have many customers for Percodans, but I took to them immediately. Their stimulant-narcotic quality was exactly what I needed to help my writing become more expressive and personal, offset the occasional line of coke (which was done as openly as in the theater box office), and make me unemotional around many heart-wrenching situations. I knew immediately why Jerry Lewis had become such a heavy user of them.

Hector was actually Benny Torres, and he and his brothers had worked at the Avon chain since they were teenagers, which can have quite a distorting effect on one's sexuality. You know, the anything with a hole attitude. His first job that he was describing was at Avon's Park Miller Theater, the city's first to openly show all gay movies. Despite his horsing around, he was a right guy, and was expert in teaching me the "turnstile trick." i.e. the box office skim. After we pocketed our first \$5, Benny knew of a newsstand run by an older black lady on 49 Street and Broadway that sold nickels of weed under the counter. He also introduced me to "bazookas," which were coke laced joints and like a short acid trip.

Barbara was Stella Stevens, office manager of the Avon chain. Jack is the notorious Phil Prince and his "lifelong junkie" pal was his cohort in crime and live-in lover (despite Phil having a family) Pat Rogers. The Methusala owner of the theaters was Murray, who was married but kept a room at the nearby President Hotel for trysts with Puerto Rican trade he'd pick up around the neighborhood. Murray started his career as a saxophone player at the Paris Theater burlesque house back in the World War II days. Bobby, who worked upstairs at the "dime a dance" Satin Ballroom, was actually my close friend Willie Saunders who's also my daughter's Godfather, who taught me many aspects of the fine art of grifting, and was extremely protective of me.

The satirical **Thing With Two Heads** ad appeared after I had a falling out (doesn't everyone) with Ken Anger; and Joel Reed, director of *Bloodsucking Freaks*. Reed unsuccessfully attempted to scam me in a movie deal. To this date, I remain the only person ever to get his money back from the odious Reed. However, my friend John Friday aka Roger Le Mar aka John Le Fleur aka John the Survivalist wasn't so lucky and Reed suckered thousands from the poor guy – all as John was losing his job from Marine Midland bank due to "downsizing." After this incident, John briefly turned into a gun toting survivalist and hooked up with the foul bunch of anti-NAMBLA creeps who called themselves Straight Kids USA and were documented in the film **Chickenhawk**.

The same week *Sleazoid* appeared, I sold my first cover story for **The Soho Weekly News** which was a distillation of a two night session of convos wth Mr. Anger. It was his first frank interview in many years. The piece was quoted liberally in the **Anger** bio I wrote with Michelle Clifford years later.

The next two pages are devoted to the first marathon Sleaze Festival I programmed during Spring 1983. Beforehand, I had done occasional club events like Club 57. I also did a few midnight movies at the 8th Street Playhouse, including reviving Herschell Gordon Lewis; Blood Feast after a ten year absence from New York movie screens. The 8th Street Playhouse was the only theater in New York to have midnight movies each night of the week. Its co-owner, Steve Hirsch, was one of Manhattan's most infamous sexual predators and would hit on the sexually confused, frustrated crowd that turned out to see Rocky Horror on weekends. Steve had the distinction of having sex in every area of his theater (including the air vents) and would sometimes pull stunts like fucking one of the kids' girlfriends as he sucked the boys' cock. He was also the first New Yorker I knew who

got GRID, at the time known at "the gay cancer." When he passed away, the theater shut its doors and he left the money to AIDS research.

Steve gave me a capper of \$150 tops for renting the movies, and I did most of the booking out the projection room at the Bryant Theater. A lot of these old time distributors were still on their last legs, in business, I managed to rent original double bills like **The Ghastly Ones** and **The Headless Eyes** from Jerry Balsam, who still maintained an office around 43rd and Broadway. Lew Mishkin, always a prick who hated exploitation though he was born into it through dear old dad, rented me the ultimate racism exploitation movie **Fight For Your Life** for only \$150. Years later, before he passed away of brain cancer, he made a scandal at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts where he would repeatedly demand \$600 for the rental of a collector's print. Also exacerbating that situation is that I refused a guest admission to the film's loser scriptwriter, Straw Weisman. The museum eventually made Lew a reasonable deal yet he never got back to them. Shortly thereafter, he was dead.

The Sleaze Festival gave me the opportunity to show many exploitation films that were personal favorites, like Axe and I Dismember Mama, the best cannibal movie (Deodato's Carnvirous aka The Last Survivor), the WIP classics The Big Bird Cage and The Big Doll House. Radley Metzger's softcore movies like Camille 2000 and Carmen Baby didn't hold up and were the festival's flops. For the all male night, I presented my pal George Payne's famous gay classic The Back Row along with a rare cartoon featurette called Demigods which depicts Marlon Brando, Sal Mineo and James Dean having sex.

George Payne Superstar (1983) was a tell it like it is interview with George, recorded in the box office of the Doll Theater on a 90 degree day. It's a mix of reality, his truth and his own menacing legends. At the time George was periodically crashing at my apartment on 14th Street and I was quite fond of him in a hero worshipping way. In personal situations, George was a pretty reserved guy for the intense image he projected on screen, with an amusingly twisted sense of humor. He was also one of the few actors I could never remember doing hardcore sex although that was the genre he specialized in – a tribute to his ability as an illusionist if there ever was one. At the time he was playing the maniac/sadist in Phil Prince's no-budget psychodramas for Avon Pictures – movies that would later run afoul of the Meese Commission. When George says that his favorite movie was Jodowosky's El Topo, the psychedelic spaghetti western in which a leather clad gunfighter wanders through a life of horrors, no cinematic choice could have fit his image or life better.

The Sporting Life (1986) is basically a john's eye view of hooker spots and experiences in Manhattan, from working girls on the stroll around Carnegie Hall after businessmen ended their day, to the raunchiest junkie hooker holes in the Lower East Side. "John Friday" aka John LaFleur aka Roger le Mar aka John the Survivalist used to have a \$50,000 a year job at Marine Midland Bank. We had known each other since NYU, where he was an adult ed computer programming student. One of his first and funniest stunts I saw him pull there was applying pressure points to the arm of a twiggy East Indian who had cut in front of him at the coffee line. He was also my most frequent movie companion on Times Square and we'd see everything from the shocking, like Alex de Renzy's Femmes de Sade to the patently ridiculous like Guyana-Cult of the Damned.

In The Sporting Life Mr. Friday recounts in an almost Kinseyoid fashion his experiences with hookers – from prep school incidents with a girl who wore falsies (was it a girl in that Kinks Lola way?) and gave blowjobs to groups of guys for \$5 a head; an incident with a black cleaning woman

who he'd pay with a bottle in *Nightmare Alley* fashion. He feels that going out with a hooker is a guarantee of sex in a cost effective manner. He also was so hypersexual at the time that he'd sneak out of the office during lunch hour to visit a whorehouse, much like a junkie needing a fix

Friday opened his tour of Manhattan brothels with an incident he'd repeat like a mantra. He's taken a date to see the Broadway show *Cats*, an expensive dinner – and the foul punch line on him is that "it came to naught. For that kind of money I could have gotten laid". Friday proceeds to give the trick's eye view of the Big Apple. He'd been a Screw reader for years – ironically we'd *both* been fans of Al Goldstein's outrageous sense of humor since we were in college, from his celeb skin discoveries like the Babs Streisand movie to "Chuck Connors A Fag!" describing the gay loop *The Soldier and the Marine*.

Friday gives vivid descriptions of apartment brothels that advertise in the back pages of Screw, which were mostly located in nice high rises on the upper east side. He documents the burgeoning Oriental Health Spa trade, noting that most of them were on the second floor above a store or warehouse, with admission through a buzzer. While describing the "heaviest load he ever shot in his life" at one of the Oriental spas, he sagely also advises to dress casually in the manner of a city worker so you won't be overcharged.

After briefly describing a fiasco fuck at a bachelor party, Friday describes the brisk trade in streetwalking up around the Carnegie Hall/Central Park area, how he'd approach streetwalkers rather aggressively up there, and be led to a hot sheets room of a touristy hotel where you'd have to sign a different register. Strolling down towards Times Square, he describes being approached by a black tranny- "this big black THING" – and politely dismissing the offer with a "no thanks." Not one to refuse an experiment with a hooker hotel with a light skinned black streetwalker around 8th Avenue and 44th Street, he describes the experience as "rushed."

Moving down to lower Third Avenue – where the *Sleazoid* headquarters were for many years - Friday describes some experiences at the Hotel Valencia (now the St. Marks Hotel) with two very young women who wouldn't have been out of place working for Sport in *Taxi Driver*. I remembered these girls as fixtures of the block; we were in effect, neighbors, and wondered who had planted them to work one of the city's worst and most dangerous hooking areas. When I saw one of them in a pimpmobile with out of state plates, I got a hint. Along with his visit to the massage parlor off the corner of 14th and 3rd which had existed since Gay Talese documented it in *Thy Neighbor's Wife*. Friday also makes note of the many transvestites working on lower Third Avenue, noting their "weird faces" but how "a friend of mine" said it was hard to distinguish a blowjob from a woman or a good TV.

Friday's odyssey of smut concludes around Forsythe Street, at the time one of the most coke/dope needle infested neighborhoods in the city. He gives a vivid description of a hooker hotel there, saying he went mostly with Puerto Ricans and the cheapest blowjob he got was for \$15, although it averaged around \$20. He also gives a fond recollection of one particular hooker he liked from West Virginia who worked out of there.

The Sporting Life was written for Swank magazine, which, like many men's magazines, had its strictures and more censorship than you'd imagine. No racial stereotypes, certain sex acts were not to be depicted. It was also run by a hag named Joyce Synder who also produced such adult fare as Raw Talent with the obnoxious Jerry Butler. I interviewed such adult film personalities as

crossover gay to straight star Jack Wranger (who was still telling the good myth that his father was in Bonanza when he had been an insurance salesman) to offbeat auteur/performer Zebedy Colt to the king of rot, David Morris. Some men's magazines are very prompt about your check. Maxim paid us on time; and Hustler, even though they took considerable liberties re-formatting our story on live sex show couples, actually sent us our check ahead of the fact. Some bottom feeders like Swank will withhold it to the point of bitter conflict and then want you to "settle" for one sum on the many pieces you've done.

At one point Swank plagiarized a story I wrote for Screw about the retarded 12 step program Sexaholics Anonymous. Michelle and I appeared at Joyce Synder's office after she had sent a telegram to my apartment. Michelle identified herself as "Bambi" and she looked nothing like a "Bambi". We mentioned the plagarization and Synder's condescendingly said "we can go over this line by line with a lawyer." She also made a very insulting offer of a low paying job for me – the subject of the telegram - to identify slides of sex performers with the bon mot "now, don't you pretend you don't know these people." That was that, and Michelle smacked her across the face, knocked the slides every which way in the office, and informed her Jimmy Burke style "I know where you live – 7 West 14th Street – and if we ever hear from you again you'll get a visit." After I had left the vice world there were many who wanted to keep their talons in me, but this jolt to Joyce got around and convinced enough of them that my association from them was severed. Other members who were right guys thought Joyce was a bitch who deserved it, and had a good laugh over it.

Friday the Sensuous John appeared in *Sleazoid* in 1985, and though a much briefer story, it was more sexually candid and a bit surreal. Friday didn't live in any sort of knick-knack cluttered manor in Jersey City, but a tiny three room walk up with his mother.

Friday the Sensuous John is true to the man's racial impulses – it opens with him attempting to shoo away two Puerto Rican thugs and then "stealing their food stamps." His fascination with Screw magazine goes full throttle, as his obsession with anal sex -- "Greek," as its known in the parlance of Screw ads. "Always say you have a normal size penis when inquiring about Greek" he sagely advises. He does impersonations of Hassidic Jews leaving now defunct massage parlors near the diamond district. Throughout the piece, Friday reveals that he has no use for minorities unless they have a big ass he wants to fuck. There are several Last Exit to Friday anecdotes contained within this short piece - how he knew "The African Queen" at the now defunct Terminal Bar in Times Square and proudly recalled pissing in the unfortunate faggot's drink; a couple who'd pick up boys at the Rocky Horror Show and have threesomes with them dressed as girls; a depiction of Puerto Ricans as sex hungry beasts ready to copulate with anything; from assaulting a stereotypical chicken "with bangs" in an alleyway to an orgy with a drag queen, a Puerto Rican and our man Friday himself. Friday's enjoyment of golden showers - something censored out of Swank - is blatantly discussed here. What is to be believed or what is a "time bandits" hallucination from some strong sinsemella out of the Sweet Tooth candy store on East 9th Street is impossible to tell. The piece gives three possible surreal ends for Mr. Friday.

Hustling the Deuce was one of my Village Voice stories, originally written in December 1985 when I was about to depart the employment of Mrs. Wilson, who ran some of the most dangerous adult theaters on 8th Avenue. The point I wanted to make about hustling is that anyone could do it; it was just another tenderloin job that could finance your next jones. Looks, age, your endowments, even your prowess, didn't seem to mean a heck of a lot. It was just the willingness to sell yourself to

another guy. I didn't want this to follow in any footsteps of gay fiction. As much as as I admired John Rechy's City of Night, this was not going to be one of these self-revelatory journeys in which the conclusion was "and then I realized I was homosexual." Nope, I was enough of an offbeat heterosexual with too many quirks as it were. These guys were some of my associates and enemies that hustled guys on the Deuce that I knew through working at adult establishments there, particularly through Mrs. Wilson's theaters on the gay strip on 8th Avenue. The whole butch/femme thing of the City of Night was outmoded, despite its remnants at places like the Night Shift. More malevolent characters like the butch queen Hanky were in vogue

For this piece, I had to meet the grand gay kahuna of the *Voice*, Richard Goldstein. Goldstein, not a particularly dashing type, had been married once (incredibly) and had gotten his first notoriety from a square's eye view book written back in the 60s called *One in Seven: Drugs on Campus*.

Goldstein and my usual editor Bob Christgau took me to a now defunct Chinese restaurant around the corner from Chistgau's apartment on 12th Street and 2nd Avenue.

Goldstein asked me confrontationally, "What are you doing about the AIDS crisis?"

I tried to explain writing pieces like this where "unsafe sex" was not only a way of life still among hustlers – but was encouraged by the proprietors of the establishments they operated out of.

He went into rant that if this sort of information became public, gays could be rounded up and put in concentration camps. (Did this have something to do with his Jewishness? I wondered.)

He also asked me the rather personal question of had I been tested for AIDS. I lied and said yes. Frankly, if I had it considering the kind of promiscuous lifestyle I led for several years, I would be dead. And it also led to my own theories (shared by others) that I didn't get fucked in the ass and didn't share needles. I definitely knew for sure that I didn't have AIDS when we had our daughter, because like it or not, you get tested clandestinely.

Finally, he asked if I used rubbers.

"No."

"Why not" he chastised.

"They interfere with the sensation and they are not tolerated in what I do for a living at this time. Which is coming to a close, anyway – mostly I do non-sexual contact bdsm work which you people would call safe sex anyway."

Perturbed, Goldstein wrote a very idiotic piece the next week about experimenting with a condom on his own unattractive self, with a picture of a rubber on the front of the *Voice*.

Christgau, as usual, did his rigorous editing job, but there were intrusive questions. I don't remember if they were from him or Goldstein; it's been two decades. One was how knew a certain hustler's equipment was not very large as one would believe to expect. Observation or experience? You get used to a lot of this type of "fact checking" when working on sexual subjects for the *Voice*

The piece, though bought and paid for by the *Voice* in December 1985, did not run until April 1986.

Out of paranoia because I was still in the area; (and because the Wilson family knew who I was and where I lived) I did some name changes. The names of all the hustlers were changed for privacy. Except for Junior aka Jumbo aka Martin Soler aka a dozen other things. It was hard to stretch sympathy for Junior. Last summer we had gone on a speedball run together which left me penniless. He could cop anywhere in the city – Spanish Harlem, the Bronx, Hell's Kitchen. He had grown up with people who ran dope houses on the lower east side and had been sniffing three dollar bags of dope since he was in high school. Junior was an effective bodyguard. But he also did the dumbest things. We'd cop in East Harlem on 118th Street, I'd safely pay my token to book out of there, and he'd hop the train. As soon as he was in a subway car, he'd be the type who'd light up a cigarette. Junior was annoying, albeit sometimes in a humorous way, and the closest comparison I could draw with a fictional character would be Tito Goya's Cupcakes in Short Eyes – you don't know if these types are just irritants or if they're gonna pull a stickup. After all Junior had done about six months in stir for sticking up a taxi cab for fix money at gunpoint.

Eventually, he started hanging around Duran, one of the mangiest of the live show performers. Willie found the association slovenly, in a water seeks its own level way, and made note of their disgusting habit of leaving their works and cookers on the stairwell of the theaters.

After making my rent money in a rather distressing way at the end of the summer, I gave Junior \$15 to go cop a bag of dope for me on 9th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen and he vanished with it. Willie gave me the *Bronx Tale* talk, of since he did that, he was out of my life and it was worth the money to get rid of him. A few times later I'd get a frantic phone call from Junior saying he was downstairs from my 14th Street apartment and needed a subway token because the clerk recognized him and he couldn't hop the train that night. I'd hang up. Junior was very savvy about hiding his tracks - in a spot on his arm, his ankle and even his dick - but when Michelle met him I asked what he'd been up to and he showed armfuls of them, in a Christ on the Cross manner, as if it was my fault for kicking him out.

Joey, or John as was his real name, was another one who had the habit of calling me collect and then getting very perturbed when I'd refuse it. He was a speedball head who was drifting into cracks and wound up on Methadone. With a bit of bemusement, I had to explain to Michelle that I wasn't any of the characters in the story and that I certainly wasn't "park bench John" as that was how he referred to himself.

There was a really stupid intro that Christgau had me write which used a monker I disliked immensely thought of by an ex-partner of mine who I was going on the outs with. It also gave all the data about what I did in the vice industry, something I wasn't willing to share at the time. Plus I thought it more effective that the article just started with the guys' stories.

The article touched on the dope scene in 9th Avenue where dope was \$15 a bag and coke was \$20s, and also de-mythologized cracks as the "pure" cocaine that the *The New York Times* had depicted them as – the ones around Times Square were garbage that made users do compulsively more. They were the smokable equivalent to the nickel cokes on the lower east side, which were likely speed with a dash of coke in them, but only with worse adulterants.

Some of the other characters in the story were Jorge, a mild mannered cha cha queen male dancer who was a 9th Avenue doper; Hanky, the a butch coke fiend queen who eventually got my job at the Venus; Manny, an older Puerto Rican hustler with predatory chickenhawk tendencies; Jojo, a fat slob who was a former hustler who'd chase after any Puerto Rican hustler with a big cock; Chris, who was very close to Joe Buck in **Midnight Cowboy** and was already starting to show signs of hep and infections from shooting coke with dirty needles; and Big Tom Buck, a former size icon who was reduced to collecting cans for crack money.

From the john's eye view, who better to ask that your prototypical homosexual trick, Toby Ross, who I nicknamed Baldhead from his low rent Phil Collins "No Jacket Required" appearance. To my understanding, Toby is still active in Chicago, and for a highly illegal person, has successfully doged the legal bullet more than anyone I ever met.

Since I'm far away from this scene, and the theaters have all closed: the real names used were the Narcissus for the Eros; Mrs. Wilson's theater that featured all male dancers between the movies. Once is a blue moon, a bunch of female tourists would stop by and I'd chuckle, "it ain't Chippendale's but it's a lot cheaper". The Ecco was the doppelganger for the Venus; Mrs. Wilson's daughter Bondi eventually sold it into the tourist trap restaurant. The Daniella. As for the bars, Eddie's for O'Neill's Backyard on 48th off 8th Avenue, and La Tropicana for Cats, which was snuggled between the Venus and the Eros. At night, when the bars closed at about 4:30 am, the Eros would close at about 5 and the Venus at 7, one hasn't seen a busier, more deranged street scene on 8th Avenue.

Most amazing was the very velour pickpocket from Newark, Joshua, a real throwback to the Jason Holliday *Portrait of Jason* era. He was sharply dressed in 80s duds, though, like me, liked all the velour 70s soul like the Delfonics and the Intruders, as I always had them playing in the tinny radio in the box office. He'd give me a large tip for admittance to the Eros (other employees wanted to keep him out) and actually showed me his trade several times. There would be a darkened curtain before entering the Eros with one of those in which useless "beware pickpockets" signs that made people grope their wallets. He's cop a feel or vice versa off several men and relieve them of their wallets; it's almost like that was part of the thrill or kink that they sought out.

One night, at about 4 am, Joshua comes darting out of the theater telling me his shoulder bag was in the paring lot and offered me \$70 to go get it. I quickly obliged, sensing this was a hot situation and he had finally taken off the wrong mark. Shortly afterwards, out shoots a customer demanding that I give him his pickpocketing loss from the box office proceeds. He insisted that he was "a senator's son" — which only prompted the wisecrack from me that "what would you father think of you hanging around a place like the Eros Theater."

The eerie thing about **Hustling the Deuce** is that most – if not all – the characters depicted in it are dead. Sometimes I have these fleeting thoughts of Junior dying in a City hospital with hep C.

While working on Hustling the Deuce, I got an offer from Variety to cover New York's adult theaters, and jumped at it. It was my final way to stick the knife in Mrs. Wilson's theaters and twist it. Yeah it was a life lesson, but it crossed my boundaries in more ways than one. Out of cheapness, Mrs. Wilson had turned to video projection at the Eros while the Venus still functioned as an triple bill revival house/flophouse open until 7 am. So I would dart between changing the reels at the Venus and occupying the Eros cashbox. The entire time I had to endure a projectionists' union

strike and walk a picket line of losers, some of whom inappropriately brought their kids around that fetid environment.

AIDS Fear Hampers Porno Biz: XXX Houses Also Feel Impact of Homevideo; 'Dark Underbelly Patronage Doesn't Help' read the *Variety* headline on December 11, 1985. The opening two paragraphs describing the Cameo theater were quoted directly by none other than our Man Friday in the field himself. He was by the Port Authority, thought he'd catch a little smut at the Cameo Theater (which was also under Mrs. Wilson's umbrella on 44th Street and 8th Avenue), and got socked in the face with aroma of the toilets which permeated the entire theater. An unappetizing metasexual gamut of men having sex with each other and transvestite hookers working the aisles greeted him. "God knows what went on in the balcony" and Mr. Friday fled for his wallet and life.

The piece goes on to list the still 26 operational adult houses in Manhattan. The encroaching redevelopment was starting to hit the Avon Theaters first, with the Doll and Bryant – the two theaters that I had managed and learned the ropes at – having lost their leases. A harbinger of worse to come the Meese Commission report would vilify Phil Prince's S&M film like **The Taming of Rebecca** as being virtually "documentary" in its depiction of abuse.

The AIDS epidemic had also put a stop to the live sex shows that were a staple of theaters like the Doll. Mrs. Wilson's theaters had tried to pay lip service to "safe sex" by putting up signs warning against sexual activity in the lobbies and sealing the glory holes. However, Frankie, the manager of the Adonis and who had been one of the drag queens in Last Exit to Brooklyn, revealed how business had been really bad but had picked up a little on the weekends because with Village sex clubs like the Mine Shaft closed, there was really no where else for wandering queens to flock to.

Since Mrs. Wilson was too cheap to pay a token projectionist to change video reels, the union strike was vividly described and I was surprised that the catcalls by the picketers directed at me like "faggot" and "remember Rock Hudson" had made it into *Variety*. Home video had also caused theatrical admissions to plummet. "Pussyman" Dave Christopher – one of those s/m sneaker pimps perpetually clad in the little leather vest - stated that the only way to get the asses back in the theater seats was by offering them something they haven't seen before. The title twists by porno producers spinning off from Hollywood movies – *Flashdance* into *Flashpants* and *Porky's* into *Piggy's* were depicted as one of their tired old wrinkles.

While Mrs. Wilson's Venus still held its own as a 16mm porn revival house, one patron quipped that its hours – open from 10:30am to 7am the next morning – made it the cheapest hotel on 8th Avenue and prompted *Variety* to put the sub-heading **Doubles as Bum Sheraton**. Two 24 hour holdouts were mentioned: The Harem, which was right off 8th Avenue on 42nd Street, and drew a lot of drag queens who would come dressed as men and change into drag after work with its ominous sign "balcony for couples only." The flotsam filled Night Shift had held on by the skin of its teeth, despite the fact that its "orgy room" and "Central Park Ramble" had both been shut by the AIDS crackdown.

Right on the Deuce, Brandt Theaters, who had owned many of the theaters whose exploitation films had been reviewed in *Sleazoid*, still had its one adult theater, the Victory, which showed straight triple bills to an audience of dirty old men, minority males, businessmen and tourists.

The *Variety* article concludes with a quote by then-adult film actor Bobby Spector who felt that less porn was being produced on film and there was a general panic over it. "It's AIDS... no one wants to refer to it by name... it's always 'the disease'. No one wants to be in these things any more — which is why I quit."

Vengeance could often be a motive for me writing a story, as was partly the motive for Tromatized (for the Film Comment's "That's Exploitation" issue in 1986). When renting a print of Ted Gushurny's imitation Radley Metzger movie Sugar Cookies, Troma co-pres Michael Herz threatened to punch me in the face for being rude to his secretary (as if he wasn't barbaric enough to his staff). I was sick of Troma getting reviews in financial publications like Barron's depicting what a sound financial risk their movies were, and tired of the crappy self-conscious exploitation movies like Squeeze Play, The First Turn On and Waitress they had been glutting up the last days of the Deuce. Also unforgivable was their reissuance of the foul Bloodsucking Freaks (aka The Incredible Torture Show aka Sardu Master of the Screaming Virgins) by the odious con man Joel M Reed. Though Troma's reissue of Reed's G.I. Exeuctioner (aka Wit's End ala Dragon Lady) was laughable enough on a triple feature; and was certainly the most accurate movie when concerning Reed's own homosexual neuroses.

A lot of kids would get out of NYU film school, think they would become the next Martin Scorsese, and end up with a low paying job at Troma with Herz and co-principal Lloyd Kaufman screaming at them constantly. Meticulously researched for Lincoln Center's Film Comment magazine, Tromatized delved deep into the roots of Troma's humble background making hardcore porn movies. Using the pseudonym Louis Su, Troma co-head Lloyd Kaufman stated his exploitation film career with the one day wonder My Sex Rated Wife, the Newcomers (the first porno musical), and his biggest hit, The Divine Obsession, a cautionary tale about the pratfalls of showbiz.

I visited the shabby Troma offices in Hell's Kitchen off 52nd which was adorned with *Rocky* posters- Kaufman had played the small role of a derelict in it and did location work for the film in Philly. Their current start director was Richard Haines, a chubby nerd who lived with his parents who had made such dreck as *Splatter U* and felt that one could "get killed" going to a Deuce Theater. Haines claimed to be a good friend of Joel Reed (as if that were something positive) and became extremely insecure and denied knowledge about Reed's con man activities.

The only thing I praised Troma for was saving the films *Cry Uncle*, one of my favorite early 70s sex comedies about the misadventures of a sleazy private eye (Allen Garfield) in the post freak era Big Apple during the summer of 1971. The movie, originally X-rated, was directed by John G. Avildsen and Kaufman was the production manager on. Another celeb crime classic they saved from the print meltdown was Bob Roberts' Sweet Savior (aka The Love Thrill Murders), which starred Troy Donohue as the Charlie Manson figure, moved the events to Manhattan's St. Marks' Place, and, again, had Kaufman as production manager. Sweet Savior also originally bore an X rating and had a four day run in 1971 with the bizarre Mickey Rooney opus B. J. Lang Presents.

In researching the piece, I spoke to three Troma workers under the condition of anonymity. After the article was out, one girl called me up, leaving a lengthy, hysterical message on my answering machine refuting everything she said. It didn't take a private eye to sense that Herz or Kaufman were sitting right next to her. Hooked: The Madness in Methadone Maintenance appeared in the Village Voice in April 1988 though it had been pretty much completed back in December 1987. This was the fist story Michelle assisted me on. I interviewed both Mark Peraino, head of Medical M, was on the second story of a building in the East 20s (the Beth Israel area housed about 30 clinics) and Charles La Porte, the former City Commissioner who oversaw the Methadone program. There were portraits of different Methadonians – from the extreme – Ciro, who lost a hand; and fondly remembers the days in the late 1960s when one could go from clinic to clinic for another dose and nod out at about 300 milligrams. Also among the cast of characters were innocuous looking white junkie types like Dick.

The article supplied unorthodox instructions on how to kick a smack habit by buying a few bottles on the street instead of going on a program. The whole thrust of the piece is that the City wanted to keep these people adult babies by giving them a substances that was more addictive than heroin and that they used as a launching pad for its variation interactions with benzodiapines like Valium, heavy downers like Placidyl, nickels of coke and the like. Commissioner La Porte's statistics about how crime went down once junkies were on the program were both antiquated and had little to do with Methadonians' daily lives Copping spots like the now-defunct coffee shop up by Lexington and 125th Street in Harlem and the wholesaling of pills at the Off Track Betting Center on 14th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues were depicted. There were descriptions of pill salesmen who ran a brisk trade with Methadonians even though they didn't use themselves.

The star of the show, with the loudest mouth, was Barry, who was the late David Morris, a second string adult actor. His girlfriend Sheila (Ashley Wells) eventually succumbed to AIDS. The last time Michelle and I saw David was in the early 1990s. He was residing in a warehoused apartment that his father – who ran "the classiest nursing home in the Bronx" – had found for him. The apartment was virtually barren except for a cabinet where David boasted "here's my money... and here's my pills" before launching into an anecdote about how two hefty black streetwalkers had relieved him of both. "They must've had a brick in their purse" claimed David, although he could very well also blacked out from the anticipated excitement.

David could have easily made his rent by selling one of these pill bottle to someone on his clinic, but no... he'd rather greedily take all of them himself besides adding street drugs like heroin and cocaine to his lethal mixture. When we first wrote the story back in 1987 David maintained a day job selling computer glare screens, but within six short years he suffered from herpes, hep B and C and likely AIDS. His skin was an ashen gray. The sex work begat the drugs with him which begat him going out with hookers. One of his last gigs in the sex or sale trade was dancing at the all male Show Palace, under the ridiculous moniker of "Rocky Rockhard", where he had moved up to Herbert Hunke PC man status, getting the other hustlers weed. David's grandmother was paying part of his \$300 rent and his parents wouldn't allow him to see her because he'd steal her meds. When David originally was on the program he was on 70 milligrams, but he had escalated over time to 100 milligrams (the maximum dose). He was clutching the disabilities act like the Bible. Originally on one of the anonymous clinics in the West 20s, he had been relegated to one in Hells' Kitchen for terminal cases. David never appeared at his clinic with a clean urine, and occasionally tried smuggling it in, only to have the counselors force him to pee in a cup in their presence.

David's intake included the 2mg xanax sticks, valium, klonopin (a strong tranquilizer which is four times as powerful as valium, but he felt all it did was "boost the Vs"), vicodin, codeine with Tylenol, and virtually any other pharmaceutical he could get his hands on. He'd have nighttime episodes of

walking through his hallways ringing his neighbor's buzzers on Phenobarbital. As well as dashes of heroin or cocaine when he could afford it. A brew that would have hospitalized or made comatose even a hard core druggy, but his tolerance was so great that he still was ambulatory. He admitted having a hospital stay from seizures because of the xanax sticks, but did not admit to the staff about his considerable valium intake.

Michelle commented that when David ran out of his rent money his parents certainly weren't going to pay it and would put him in a private institution. One day, around when I turned 40 in1999 I called his mother, who was a social worker, to find out what happened to him. "David died." She said it without an ounce of emotion in her voice, like he was a troublesome patient who was out of her hair. He had been committed to a private facility in Florida. "How did you know David? From drugs?" I just said I knew him from the city and was concerned about what had happened to him.

In Europe, in lieu of methadone, they are having great success with a tablet called DF-118, which is 30mg of pure dihydrocodeine. Don't be misled by the name- it's not hydrocodone, codeine or oxycodone, and certainly doesn't give the "warm fuzzy feeling" druggies seek out from those meds. Actually invented about 1900 by Germans in search of the perfect cough and cold remedy, it's like a double binding codeine. One tablet equals 2.5 mg of Methadone, and 5 mg of morphine. You can carry it in a prescription bottle and not have to have the contact with the clinic – which is one of Commissioner La Porte's theories – "that's the main event. That's where they see all their friends." Well, with friends like that you don't need enemies. It's used for everything from body aches to postoperative pain in Europe, South Africa, and the Pacific Rim and is definitely an "up" not a bedtime medication. Europeans are having greater success treating long term addicts with this medicine, which gives them a light buzz, and is easier to detoxify off. It seems that the United States government would rather leave people in the infantile, dependent state that methadone creates.

Point of Return was a short piece I wrote for the *Village Voice* on September 8, 1992 about ACT-UP's Needle Exchange program. I felt that it was a necessity during the AIDS epidemic that people have the opportunity to have clean works. Buying works had always been one of the riskiest aspects of intravenous drug use. You inevitably got them out of some filthy park where who knows what kind of hospital worker with dubious ethics had smuggled them out. The piece was brief and to the point; it portrayed the ACT-UP workers – many of whom had been or were still active junkies – and the clientele they served. They did most of their work on the Lower East Side (though, as you will recall from the Hustling the Deuce article, people always tried to get rid of "half new" diabetic sets in Midtown). An entire mosaic of New Yorkers showed up to get their new sets – people who looked like Saturday afternoon beer drinkers, parents with children in strollers, and the trip concluded with a giveout at a shantytown underneath the Brooklyn Bridge. I'm really glad I wrote the piece. It appeared not only in the *Voice* but in an ACLU book about the second decade of AIDS, and as a sidebar in a book by Health-Pak, Beyond Crisis.

In 1995 the Village Voice had a cover story called Sleazy Does It which was dedicated to "savoring Times Square before Disney took over". For a change, it had a nostalgic rather than accusatory tone. The story, Sex Square, was a brief autobiographical re-cap of my career in Times Square. How my repressive parents had a twisted fascination with Times Square (especially my father, who recalled it from his World War II shore patrol days), my dropout from corporate life, my first job at the godawful Night Shift, a touch of the Avon Dynasty, with the murder of Phil Prince's wife pre-dating Phil's movies the Meese Commission would later attack like Kneel Before Me, More seeds of the Avon Dynasty story that Michelle would harvest so well in the Avon Dynasty

piece, as well as the issue of Metasex #2: The Roughies, with its story Black and Blue: New York's Roughie Grindhouses and the Films That Played Them. I discussed my friendships with Wllie and George Payne, and how bonds with functional Darwinists like these men could keep one from suicide. My own slippage into hard drug use – I wasn't the first or the last in Times Square – was addressed. For some comical relief, there were some sidesplitting tales of the psychosexual madness that took place at Mrs. Wilson's theater. The piece ends with me actually meeting Michelle face to face, and us going to our first date at the Lyric Theater to see Mountainside Motel Massacre and Women for Sale.

The last story in this compilation I have very mixed feelings about. Go E Mail the Doctor was the first piece written in defense of the (at the time new) telemedicine field. It appeared in the *Village Voice* on October 15, 2003 and has been reproduced ad infinitum on messageboards like drugbuyers.com.

We had been displaced briefly to Florida after 9-11 and a disastrous apartment fire. Instead of this being mellow head's paradise Ft. Lauderdale-Miami, where we spent a year in 1990, this was the fascistic regime of the President's brother, Jeb Bush, whose daughter had just gotten caught for trying to pass a Xanax script through a drive-through Walgreen's. Bush said to "pray for her." Heh heh. I'm sure if I would have pulled the same shenanigan there I would be seeing the inside of Sharps Prison, the local jail where inmates regularly hung themselves

In New York we were treated by a Dr. Feelgood who had us on about 12 norco 10's a day, soma, and would give out undated prescriptions for 120 Valiums to use whenever we felt like using them. This part of Melbourne, Florida was once a "party" area but signs in doctor's offices read "no narcotics given." Doctors had so little to do that doctors would actually finger patients as "drug seekers." The first quack I saw gave me a prescription to Paxil (despite the fact that I showed him the pharmacy printout of the plethora of meds I had been on). Only a moron would think that you wouldn't need to be on some sort of anti-seizure sedative like klonopin after all that, and he was such an idiot he didn't even notice I had a 103 degree fever. Paxil made Michelle and I both so suicidal we stopped it cold.

Having worked in a pain clinic in Florida when I was first there, chronic pain patients are among the most irritating individuals to deal with. Nothing is for fun or euphoria, everything has to be "medically justified". The companies that dealt in telemedicine, "ops," had their own irritating nomenclatures not unlike that stupid AA doublespeak and revolved around a message board called drugbuyers.com. There were IOPS (international pharmacies), NROPS (no record ops, where you just simply filled out an online form to order the medications you wanted, and ROPS (ones which required some form of medical record, be it an old scribbly doctor's note coupled with a copy of your Rx records proving you had taken the med before so they wouldn't get it trouble)

The NROPs, which had names like buymeds.com and tropicalrx.com, and often funneled money out of the country into holding accounts in Costa Rica, were the first to go. The better ops offered a 5 minute consultation by a physician's assistant who basically asked you what you wanted, how many, offered two refills, and asked if you wanted overnight or two day shipping. Eventually all domestic ops, to pay lip service to the legal system, had their customers supply some sort of medical records (either old prescriptions or a doctor's exam from the last year, or preferably both). The same general routine exists – they want to get your order and get your off the phone as quickly as possible.

International pharmacies – IOPS – still exist but you risk receiving a "love letter" from customs stating that your products will be destroyed within thirty days unless you challenge it – and the only people who can do that are those with a DEA license to import controlled substances. Nonetheless, IOPS offer some of the best deals – there is no \$100 (at least) fee for a doctor's visit, you can order as much or as little as you want, and some offer benzodizapines that aren't sold in the United States like nitrazepam, a powerful English sleeping pill, rivitrol, the brand name of European klonopin which are easier to split, and very inexpensive prices on large amounts of brand name valiums.

It's strongly my feeling that a doctor who overprescribes is just as bad as one who won't write at all. And after a certain age you know what hits you right (some cannot take the rebound anxiety of xanax as others prefer a longer acting bemzo). The story portrayed several individuals who had been caught up in the op scene, which was playing on the uninsured and desperate. A flight attendant who claimed to suffer from fibromyalgia. A woman who was using about four of these online services a week claimed to be a migrainer. When they were giving her the sanity test at a local hospital, I referred her to my old Dr. Feelgood (who lived in her town just above Manhattan). He knew what was going on, with her taking about 14 Lortab 10's a day, and hooked up to a morphine tube for a while. One character who invented a well known children's game had some cracked theory on male menopause, got high with his with his grown kids, and was some twisted version of the 1950s Milltown man, jumpstarting the day with Ritalin, adding to his brew contugesic, a fiendish time-released version analog of DF-118 that was pulled off the market for a while, and ending his day with consuming rivitrol over vodka with a sillnox (European ambien). The most conservative of these characters was J.R., an Oakie preacher who could not afford the tests for his herniated disks and took the least amount of medication possible. A deeper underlying cause of many women involved in the op shuffle is that their husbands had cheated on them, and this seemed to be the only relief at hand.

In the early 1990s, vicodin (hydrocodone products) were a well kept secret and now they're available in over 40 different generics and are America's most popular drug. Addiction to them starts very rapidly and they are very difficult to taper off of. It's like a shorter acting methadone. The explosion in popularity of hydrocodone products coincided with 9-11 and the Iraq war. Another one the present government's tools of keeping citizenry as dummied up as possible. Vicodin products are only a Schedule III narcotic though they are far more addicting than a Schedule II one like Percocet. The telemedicine ops are the companies that play a major part in keeping vicodin available to the hooked.

As I stated in the story, it's a free country and you have the right to choose whatever medical care you feel is right for you, be it holistic or prescription. Yet ultimately I felt roped into a game that was more profitable for the ops. I ultimately was paid with a fistful of prescriptions which ultimately made bad habits worse.

One side effect of me doing this story was me acting as de facto publicity agent for one of the better known ops (who has since changed their name), doing market research for them. To this day my medication descriptions show up on their website.

In my 30 years on the Deuce, I've gotten hurt, I've seen others get hurt. But I'm glad I'm still alive and here to tell the tale.

SLEAFIOLD EXPRESS

The largest circulation of anything of its particular type

Volume 1, Number 1 June 18, 1930

You ho ld in your hands the premier issue of the newsletter for all you horror junk and underground movie mavens. I'll be patrolling the Times Square, revival and Club 57-Monster Movie Club circuit. Hopefully, you can read this biweekly, and as time goes on it'll improve in format and content.

ODDITY OF THE WEEK

"Let Me Die a Woman"

I caught this genuine cinematic peculiarity at the extremely raunchy Anco Theater on 42nd Street. It was playing with last year's "The Seven Brothers Meet Dracula," which deserves mention here as it is the first kung fu-Dracula movie, a co-production of the Shaw Brothers and Hammer Films starring Peter Cushing. Well, back to the main feature. It deals with transsexuality in the most tasteless and sleazy manner imaginable and was released without an MPAA rating by one Hygiene Films. Commentary and descriptions of case histories are suppiled by a "doctor," who resembles a skid row panhandler in a white coat. Because this film is so poorly shot and edited, and so generally shoddy in construction that it is rather slow moving despite its fascinating subject. It also encorporates, rather ridiculously, stock and unrelated footage, ranging from street scenes to old Harry Reems porn loops. Enfortunately, alot of this film has such an unpleasant feel that it misses the unintentional laughs that "Mondo Cane" type documentaries usually provide. What it does deliver is some sequences that are movie firsts. There is a brief, startling view of a cock to cunt operation. In several shots, the "doctor" highlights the obvious on some preop transsexuals with a metal pointer. Another scene simulates self castration, superimposed over the doctor as he discusses that particular case. The director occasionally cuts to an interview with a postop male transsexual that is intermittenly revealing. All in all, this is not a good film by any standards but it does offer something of interest to sensation and sleaze The definitive film on this tomongers. pic is yet to come.

COLLING ATTRACTIONS

"Sacrifice," from the people who brought you "Carniverous" will be reviewed next assue, as it opens on Times\Suare soon.

SUMMER FULL WITH ROGER CORNAN

"Humanoids From the Deep"

and "Piranha"

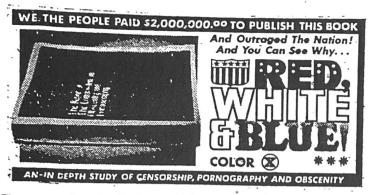
Both of these films are brought to a by one of the original kings of tras Roger Corman, through his company, We World Pictures, in an obvious attemp to cash in on summer surf sleaze. "Humanoids" is the new one, and it I a good plot premise about undersca mutants that surface to rape girls i an attempt to expand the ranks of their species, but the film literall sinks amist a plethora of slack pacing, dull characters and cliches. "Piranha," originally released in 1978, is the small winner here. involves a special strain of Piranha that, developed by the government as a secret weapon, can survive in salt water and can strip people to the bone in seconds. Through complicate circumstances, they get loose and wreak havoc on such amusing places a a children's camp and a tourist reso There are some surprisingly bloody scenes, and the film is well populat with such B picture-horror veterans as Heather Menzies, Barbara Steele, and Bradford Dillman (most recently seen as Dr. Gary Straw in "Guyana, Cult of the Dammed"). Not great, bu quite entertaining. "Piranha" will be at the Monster Movie Club July 1.

FROM DOWN UNDER

"Mad Max"

Another film with a plot premise that is not satisfactorily realized, "Mad Max" is an Australian film "dub bed" by AIP into American English. It deals with a "Clockwork Orange" like future, where the major force o law and order are leather clad cops driving high speed cars. Max, the hero, battles a savage motorcycle gang through most of the film. Much of the plotting seems creaky and obvious, and graphic violence is absent





DEEP FRIED STREETS OF SIN by Mr. Sleazoid

If you're coming from out of town, you step into the Port Authority Bus Terminal. The 5 years of renovation has not deterred lunatics, sidewalk preachers, hustlers and runaways, and the local criminal element. They float freely among travelers and undercover police. The Port Authority of City of Night with its porcelain tiles, post-war facade, dirty floors and creepy toilets is history.

The new physical layout here evokes images of a <u>Bladerunner</u> shopping mall, all the more appropriate for Ken Anger's frequent acid excursions in it. Can you imagine a 250 pound man wearing a dirty blue velour top, faded Devil's jeans and zip up boots, carrying a valise, staring in awe at one of the Rube Goldberg "cultural" contraptions on display? The most remarkable of these taxpayer supported objects is a glass box constantly clanging as funnels and pulleys make a ball go from one end to the other. Don't miss the dirty white plaster sculpture of people passing through a security check surrounded by sleeping derelicts. Allegedly, the once rampant boy prostitution has moved to the terminal's secluded parking areas above or crazy 8th Ave. below.

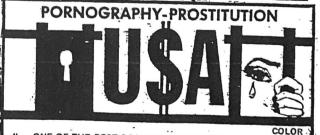
The duece, 42nd St. between 7th and 8th, is where it all happens. On either side of the street, you can walk past the brothers trying to peddle beat drugs, switchblades and ID. Wall to wall grindhouses with large marquees peppered with adult bookstores and fast food places. (Check out Barking Fish on 8th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. Excellent). All the grindhouses, mostly owned by Brandt Theaters, have (again) post-war interiors that have been unkept but somehow remain indestructible. Elaborations include balconies, unused opera seats, electronic surveillance warning signs before long staircases leading down to large bathrooms. Better hold it in unless you're in a crowd of 3 or more. Needless to say, these theaters provide the biggest proportion of movies reviewed by Sleazoid.

The block is not what is was even 5 years ago. Streetwalkers out of <u>Taxi Driver</u> have turned into the occasional trashy drag queen. Boy prostitution has been replaced by minority hustlers. In its stead, what you will see now will be token massage parlors, sex emporiums like Show World, and the remaining bookstores. Police are posted almost around the clock, so the block deactivates much earlier. Types on the street are tourists, all life casualties outlined in the last <u>Sleazoid</u> mainessmen, borough punks, and moviegoing minorities. One should never feel intimidated walking town 42nd St.; it's all really comic and Officer O'Leary is watching your back.

You turn the corner on the north side of 42nd and 7th, head uptown and your first sight is 'layland. The FASCINATION sign which so intruiged John Rechy and the later site of 12 year old mustlers has turned into overwhelming electricity, A/C and human. Like all modern arcades, video ames have replaced pinball, and young kids from all corners of the city mingle with businessmen, erds and minority males killing time. Staff includes Henry security guards and change givers who are names like Fast Eddie or are pederast Popeyes. Enough has been said about the way video ames suck minds, young and old, Mr. Sleazoid included, into dropping quarter after quarter into he slots. Remainders of the past include a fortune teller dummy, ski ball with prizes like mages or little pads, and bingo machines. For the stalwart, there are still a few functional pinall machines. Souvenir pictures from Times Square can be had for \$1.25 for 4 exposures in a coth instead of the \$5 big production number by the black beatboppers that hook passers by to sit na wicker chair on the street for one Polaroid. The choice is yours. Other Playlands in the imes Square area (from 46th to 49th Sts.) are less spectacular.

Despite all this talk of video replacing porn theaters, straight hardcore houses are going trong around Times Square. The decrepit Anco, site of past Sleazoid discoveries like Let Me Die

Woman, has just gone porno, as has the formerly Spanish anguage Big Apple on 43rd and B'way. You can count on sats with sunken springs and the occasional guy jerking If at any porn palace. On the duece, the Victory is a rindhouse showing triple bills of second run flicks for 2-\$3. Pick of the litter in the audience: Popeyes, busnessmen, Orientals, faggots, street blacks, minority suples. Every so often, especially holidays, the Victory 111 run horror/exploitation triples. Teen Lust had its 'C premier there last year. Down the block towards 8th



"... ONE OF THE BEST DOCUMENTARIES EVER FILMED ON THIS CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT MATTER."

* STAR BANNER EVE-NEWS

RATED X ADULTS ONLY NO ONE UNDER 18 ADMITTED

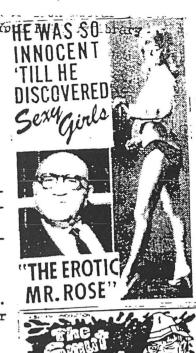
ick recent movies double billed 24 hours a day. This policy must tract the black derelicts, who beat out Popeyes and businessmen as e predominant audience members. James Barnes, pictured in the last eazoid, would have felt right at home with the other men carrying opping bags and talking to themselves. The loud guffawing of the nry staff from the lounge area is audible in the front of the barely t auditorium. "Balcony for couples only."

Shoebox 16mm houses remind one of the theater Travis Bickle buys s ju-jus in and long vanished spots like the Odd and the Mermaid. e Doll, on 48th and 7th, is pretty benign, frequented by Popeyes, busmessmen, Orientals and tourists. Old hardcore alternates with no budg-: S&M extravaganzas like Kneel Before Me. Every hour and a half, a suple fucks on stage, making this one of the last live show movie theaers. (Farewell to the ancient Bryant on 42nd between B'way and 6th, nich recently lost its lease). The Venus, another all nighter on 45th nd 8th, is somewhat creepier. You cannot see your watch in the pitch lack interior. Odor of lavender mothballs. Street blacks and faggots. ames like Sex Deal and Virgin Flesh on the marquee and handpainted door igns are never the real titles of the old hardcore playing. Let's not orget the cocksucker staff that checks out your crotch as you walk in. ther 8th Ave. houses include the Cameo, a big, shabby, brightly lit heater similar to the Victory is clientele and programming. Streetwalkrs around the balcony. A quick check on the Capri's balcony revealed arieties Photoplays type activity between Popeyes and businessmen.

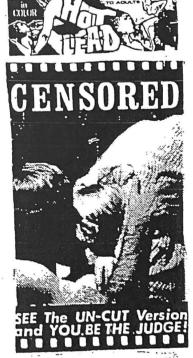
The subject of male theaters inevitably connects with slime and hese slime pits are all concentrated around 8th Ave. With their single-linded cruise function, they have become AIDS distribution centers ("are outsure that black man was a Haitian?"). Decrepit interiors, weird or or origin (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and west Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East and West Indian) staff, repellent clientele including clossorieign (East

Times Square's first male theater, the Park-Miller, was a huge house with 3 balconies. Opening in the late 60s, it showed Pat Rocco and, yes, Ken Anger films prior to hardcore. It's now reopened for those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M those old creeps who remember at the site of the formerly straight S&M them. The Adonis is lavish in a tacky way, with kitchy reproductions of classic sculpture images and lots of red. There is a well used balcony. The Big Top, on 49th and B'way, tries to appeal to clones balcony. The Big Top, on 49th and B'way, tries to appeal to clones with premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay blockbuster), a cafewith premier movies (recently, a John Holmes gay

The apotheosis of these sewers was the 24 hour Night Shift, now the supposedly renovated Omega. A hangout for drag queen cashiers and their Haymarket hustler husbands, 18-19 year old chickens languid and street-Haymarket hustler husbands, tourists, businessmen, minorities, and wise, throngs of pickpockets, tourists, businessmen, minorities, and flotsam attracted to a cheap place to crash any time of the day or night. The layout and interior are shocking, vivid as a nightmare. It takes a mind steeped in drugs or loosed by mental retardation to hang more than mind steeped in drugs or loosed by mental retardation to hang more than mind steeped in this pit. A slow, mugger's paradise elevator. On either 5 minutes in this pit. A slow, mugger's paradise elevator. On either 5 minutes in this pit. A slow, mugger's paradise elevator. On either 5 minutes in this pit. A slow, mugger's paradise elevator on the 2 floors, candy counters converted into sex goods concession of the 2 floors, candy counters converted into sex goods concession of the first floor is a few folding chairs in front of a big, stands. On the first floor is a few folding chairs in front of a big, blurry video screen, a pathetic attempt at imitating the Central (OVER)









SWINGER JOIN US IN...



MATURE LOVERS IN AN ALPINE SETTING!





Park ramble with a bunch of fake trees in a line, and busted lockers. On the second, non-union projectionists show ragged films with innumerable splices in a tree house like shack. Other ornaments include 2 small toir lets, a painted "subway car," and a poolroom converted into a garbage strewn flophouse for pickpockets and drunks. Works with discharged blood were once found in the bathroom. Why anyone would come here looking for a trick is beyond imagination. A chance encounter with Ken Anger there resulted in his madly dashing towards the elevator on the dirty rug past a Casablanca fan and an imitation Tom of Finland mural for a panicked exit. Eccentrics and hardcore johns will always keep these places in operation.

Heterosex entertainment from the peep shows and loop booths, to the burlesque show at the Harmony or the wild goings on at the Pussycat are pretty predictable. Porn stars make a good buck working these places. Screw magazine generally rates these establishments as fair, and we would tend to agree. Some of these theaters are hooked into floor work, with the aim being to secure "private sessions." Anyone willing to participate should line their pockets with \$100. Male strip joints are either relatively innocuous or total raunch. The Gaiety alternates go-go boys with screen classics like Summer Sessions. Show Palace is far more shocking, featuring live sex shows between young white trash or Spanish guys, who also have contact with the old pederasts in the audience. This place has gotten raided in the past.

Some memories of entertainment not movies or shows: Hubert's Museum strikes to mind, in the middle of the duece (now Peepland). This was a low budget wax museum with a freak show in the basement. Too long ago removed to provide anything more than vague impressions. Cowboy hustlers that disappeared post-Midnight Cowboy. Superfly pimps in loud outfits parading with their harem or cruising in their late model Coup D'Ville. The whole hooker scene outlined in books like Pimp--all this is gone ...

For dirty books and emporiums surrounding them, Show World's huge marquee and Peepland's giant quarter make them immediately recognizable to out of towners. Other folks get funkier.

Where the police station that most functions as a tourist guide stands between B'way and 7th on 42nd St. was Crossroads Books, unmatched in its flagrant illegality. Before busts made it bite the dust in '76, the major function of this bookstore seemed to be kiddle and animal porn. Even the straight mags looked filthy in its context. Port Authority rejects in the gay section. Parking meter loop viewers, busy with curious Popeyes. 25¢ gets the stars: John Holmes and an Oriental girl, the Lind. Lovelace dog movie.

Still thriving is Blackjack Books, near the IRT subway at the south end of 42nd and 7th. One entrance leads upstairs to the Frisco Theater. Once premiering an S&M live show with good production values and attractlive white models in '77, it's now a live show/girl booth/25¢ strip comple The other entrance leads to the main store, with its predictable mag sele ction, gay area and loop booths. Minority hustlers in front of the entra nces trick with seedy businessmen in the loop booths for \$10 or less. If you think this scene is hectic, add on flotsam from 8th Ave. all male the ters and Haymarket hustlers for the activity in the now razed bookstore o 50th and 8th. Appropriately, a murder in Cruising was shot in its loop booths. Its stock included many "educational" books on bestiality, S&M o homosexuality.

Bookstores sometimes seem counterparts of each other, regardless of whether or not they share management. G&A Books on the north end of the duece near 8th Ave. and 250 Books opposite it have the pick of the slick in publications. Occasionally, odd non-porn stuff will turn up there; no Le Petomaine, the biography of a Frenchman who gave fart concerts. These stores seem to share the same East Indian employees and the same clientel corporate Popeyes, couples, curiosity seekers, faggots.

Some places specialize in kink. Archaic was the now defunct booksto near the Variety office on 46th St., which had Betty Page and sailor phot packs. Kinematics on 47th and 7th is a small store living up to its large "Spanking-Bondage-Wrestling" sign. Back on the duece, red doored "be 21 or be gone" types -- one on 7th Ave. between 41st and 42nd and the other in the middle of 42nd on the same block --hold on to their specialized trade. Difficult to obtain items are next to more common ones. Imported English mags, hundreds of little books, girlfighting loops and the goo goo da da eroticism of grown aen in baby's clothing are all available here.

On the shelves of these bookstores you'll find:

-Straight Hardcore Pornography (incl. lez). Mostly white (from herein, all porn is white unless otherwise noted). Male on top, the come shot explicitly manipulated, sometimes twice. Story oriented around sterotypical situations i.e. secretary and hoss, delivery boy and housewife, hook and john. Being a porn actress is a strong selling point, maybe to keep up with the slick production these magazines achieve. The reigning icons include Saka, Vanessa del Rio, Susie Nero, Lisa de Leeuw, Candy Samples, Rhonda Jo Petty. Unless you can get off by just reading, bypass modern pocketbooks since their only illustration is the cover. Sax in the family (Daddy's Little Girl) still seems to be the fave in this medium. If you're not getting it in the flesh, you probably know about this stuff already.

-S&M/Bondage/Fetish. Getting closer to more closets, the popularity of this material has not waned at all since the early days of Irving Klaw and John Willie in the 40s. Where to start, in this most varied of all porn areas: Bilbrew and Stanton cartoon packs (always unique); slick mags from House of Milan (highly professional); archaic photo packs from the 50s through early 70s (very real); Nutrix little books often featuring (yumi) Betty Page; Fetish Times type newspapers (authentic); Belier Press cartoon collections (loving care); and numerous one shots c.f.

the last Sleazoid for the Professor's story.

Cartoon collections include drawings and plates dating from the turn of the century. Typical Carlo drawings feature nubile white women at Arab slave auctions or as pony girls. Variations on this come from the pen of Eric Stanton, whose imagination conjured anything from hillbilly catfights to muscular men forced into drag by dominatrixes. Interpruting similar fantasies in reality are photo packs and slick mags. A typical House of Milan sprund could feature 3 different stories of kidnap and subsequent bondage and whipping, all with goodlooking, California actresses. Shocking and more underground are the Bobo photo packs, involving stepfather-daughter heavy c.p. (again, families). The literary twist in this maelstrom is provided by who else but the blokes from blimey ole' who publish endless magazines of caned schoolgirls with weird faces and masks on the cover.

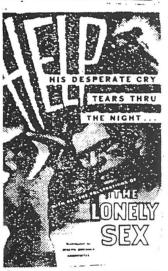
If you don't gotta fetish, get one: enemas, high heels, leather, rubber, Obeah black master, piercing rings, costumes, you name it. Check out The Many Faces of Rene with Rene Bond as a dominatrix among several other costumed personas. Fetish Times is the Screw type journal for this and more, extending into anomalies. The paper is professionally laid out yet never fails to startle. Endless nerds may trade photos snapped in theaters during "tit shots" in Mortuary and the slave ship in The Magic Christian (Ringol), but FT beat "you" to it. Columns on brief bondage scenes in movies and TV always have blurry pictures taken off the idiot box or stills. A memorable FT photo session involved a young, hearty, nude white girl forced into submission by a Spanish dominatrix wearing a sleaveless mini dress and leather lace up boots ala Faster Pussy-Whack.

remain classic.



Little books, most noteably by Nutrix, were the progenitors of this genre and in all ways Their sleaze hallmarks are counted in the numerous typographical errors in the personally conceived stories. A sample photo below white on black lettering formed their distinctive covers. Find the address of Movie Star News (recently moved from Wacked 14) and send for their piece of history catelogue. Or better still, see the unforgettable Paula Klaw as you browse around between Professor types looking through the bondage section, old queens checking beefcake stills, and people from publications getting overcharged to reproduce stuff. The birthplace for Nutrix, Irving Klaw photos, and Betty Page iconography. (OVER)









-TV/TS. Buggin' Out sez "love the girls, love the girls, so many boys wanna be girls." Mr. Sleazoid sez "some guys like the draaaaggg queens more than the real girls." Forced crossdressing (featured in Nutrix publications) and transvestism including muscular men flaunting bras and skirts in endless other little books only scratches the surface. Beyond these 50s originated items, all contemporary manner of plastic dolls and minority queens is open for penetration. The most popular of the slick magazines lately is the she-male phenom with the pre-op Sulka as its most visible icon. She's also featured in a few loops with other "women" sharing her tits 'n' cock situation. All hetero fantasies are projected onto the concept of getting one of these ladies. Their faces are really great and, of course, they can suck cock great. What happens when the guy wants more than oral--steak pussy. Cheaply shot, ill lit photos of hustlers making Spanish queens in sleazy hotel rooms and -- coops! -- sometimes sucking dick themselves accompanied by personal ads from 300 pound black drag queen lovers are the extreme format for these mags. Very popular and less funky is the Hard TS series with clones fucking (and getting fucked by) pre-ops. And yes, fellas, there's even "girlie" mags containing T&C shots of Sulka and pals in solo appearances -- Directory of She Males sets the mean.

-The Gay Male. Oh she has so much at her disposal. All hetero hangups and fantasies have been transferred to the homo market, added on to their icons and images. City of Night era muscle books have become Johnny Harden in a sailor suit sucking himself off or 2 clones in a haystack. Popular themes still include: 2 men in a gym; uniforms (cop and jogger); leather, piss and cruel bondage. Interesting hangovers and disguised reissues from the 70s inevitably involve... Chicken fantasies—teenage runaways and an older hippie having sex alternate with road maps in Trippin' Chicken. Icons of the past—Bill Eld and Mark Stevens in (yes, again) big dick layouts. Always memorable will be blonde pinned eyed Bill Harrison with 11" hanging out of army fatigues. Jim Cassidy has all but disappeared, the major blonde bodybuilder now being Jack Wrangler.

Comic artists reached a penultimate in Tom of Finland's blockheaded masturbations that are presently featured in Drummer and innumerable walls in cruise bars and faggots' houses. Kudos to anonymous artistes highlighting covers of gay literature for their homogenous blockhead fixation -- if we all were only hung so well. Paramount among homosexual pocketbooks is The Queen by Bernard Lautrec. From the Jules Feiffer-like rendition of a limp wristed fairy with an ascot and cigarette holder wearing a purple shirt on the blue and white cover to its Andy Milligan nightmare of a story, it is as ghastly as it is laughable. "Harry Frame wasn't the swishy type, and didn't perhaps a high voice and there was no effeminate lips when he pronounced certain words. Lastly, Harry was perfectly confident that he could make almost any young lad he encountered, provided the encounter took place at a proper time and in an appropriate environment. such as the one he was now in-a lonely countryside." The mother of one of the retarded hicks he seduces with beer and Playboys blackmails him. Uhhh...

-Personals. Everyone's seen such mags containing photos of fat ugly men and hooks. The amazing Love magazine and its My Love best of survives as a human document. "The Only Reader Written Sex Magazine" was beautifully laid out on what must have been a shoestring budget in the Screw format. This shows the reality behind the fantasies. Intensely personal articles are typeset without grammatical corrections. "I Fell in Love With a Boy With Tits" by a black con is like the first person stories told by street people in William Burroughs and Hubert Selby. "...every time I would come out of a nod I could see her black panties. My dick got so hard I thought it was going to bust... When I grab her dick it scared me to deth for I thought I had a snake in my hand." The photo of his anima, a Spanish street queen with a 'fro wearing a miniskirt. In the TV/TS realm are tru-

offbeat photos of a bodybuilding granny closet crossdresser wearing a -B bra and smiling. He writes about drinking his own come and piss in e norning coffee. Other scenes, from consenting gangbangs to bestialy, are treated matter of fact. The few empty drums here -- a guy talkg about the size of his cock with a photo of a huge dildo over his al endowments -- make a crazy noise. Oddly happy if strange drawings by e of the editors, a beautiful acid goddess type, Elsa del Puerto, are terspersed throughout. We're sure Love would still be a perceptive ok at sex and something for any independent publication to look up to d it continued publishing. Last word on it was that 2 of the editors re in jail for a tax mess that evolved out of obscenity charges. Best

-Anomalies. All the leftovers. Big tits, animals, amputees, cast-.tion, milk maids, pregnant women, fake moppets and tarts, Black Beras, infantalism. Sleazoid Express welcomes any other contributions at were skipped over. Not necessarily hardcore, although what else e you going to do with an animal? Still, they appeal to core audiices that catapult these obsessions from harmless jokes into the dark alms of the psyche.

What's with big tits? In the 50s, they were an attribute of the xdels, but now just take a look at the ugly girls and objectified lots in 300 Big Tit Photos. Grown women as nymphets and Black Berthas re twisted T&A distortions. As for pregnant women and milk maids,

me on, let's have some more respect.

Legality forbids slick animal mags but the subject and photos of : worms its way into "educational" books like Sex Between Humans and nimals (visible in the Pornography in Hollywood reel) and the exceptonal pocket book The Secret Life of Robinson Crusce by Humphrey Richrdson. This Victorian-styled, cover and prose wise, '67 novel has the olysexual Crusoe getting it on with dogs, sheep and "a plantigrade, poly-haired and resembling a dormouse. Plantigrade must be made to nderstand, must be made to suck, not to bite, for when, instead of a inana, he is offered the real thing. There must be no mistake." less what happens to Man Friday.

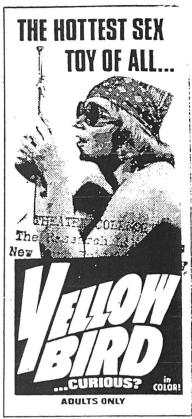
Bestiality is unnatural, but talk about amputees. FT recently irned their "Amputee Love" column into a slick mag. Another thing to itch for, like money and strange diseases, as a sexual signpost for the resent decade. FT has also covered castration, but chief among castrao lit is the "case history" pocketbook Men Without Stones by Robert shbein, Ph.D. Adorning the cover is a musclebound male figue hunched "He was sitting out on the backyard with a big box of fireworks n his lap. Suddenly, there was a loud explosion followed by a scream f agony." FT recently turned a simulated photo feature on cannibalism nto a contemporary rumination as a bunch of girls boil a guy in a pot nd eat him. Just what's left....

What is left is that the porn market is flooded with all manner of iterature and pictorials, very little of which concerns the missionary osition. Hey, what did you think pornography is all about?





ESI PRODUCTIONS presents









Imagine Fight For Your Life crossed with Bloodthirsty Butchers. The Lounge Theater, featuring 2 XXX movies and a live sex show in the tenderloin, is all that and more. The gate goes up in the morning. The lights are switched on. The Korean guy with his stand of buy now, break in an hour trinkets, squaks about customers. The fat man, resembling large cubes stacked askew, walking bow legged, with the same grey suit, straw hat and square glasses each day, comes to bullshit with the Korean. Hector, the Spanish guy who works the floor while I'm in the cashbox, starts horsing around. "Let me fuck that skinny white ass." "Fuck off." He goes back to yelling at girls on the street—"hey miss, you dropped something." A stocking capped Popeye

steve's the projectionist. A very sweet guy unable to dislike anyone. Short, wire-rimmed isses, looking much younger than 40. Divorced with kids. Being in the projectionists' union, makes much more than other employees. Having a painkiller 'script, he can take them each day

l get high "my way." Everybody's got their problems.

John is 44 and, also, looks much younger. An ex-bodybuilder gone thin, not much taller than Steve, very handsome. Unbelievably intense in dominant/tough guy roles even when the porn movies around him collapse. He hangs out at the Lounge to get calls, watch his own stuff, pick up tips from other movies or the shows, sometimes crash. He's very hyper and lives day to day. The ability to disappear at the blink of an eye when there's trouble. A paranoid soothsayer, predicting the Lower East Side panic a month before it happened. Endless on the money wise-cracks. On an obnoxious nerd porn movie crew member: "He got that earring to show you real men can take some pain." John never forgets a favor and has the biggest heart of anyone in porn.

Everyone is paid so little employee theft is a fact of life. There are 3 things that can happen to an Oriental entering the Lounge. One, the turnstile will move the opposite way, the admission money lining Hector's and my pockets. Two, they will be mugged in the basement men's room. Note the experience of a Japanese businessman with an out of place tie and spittle running down his face: "They took my wallet. They tried to kill me. Call the police." Three, they will have their pockets picked in the theater's small, decrepit interior. (Mugging Orientals seems to be a time honored NYC tradition. Check out the anecdotes in the Grove Press paperback The Addict in the Street).

Hector was great at working the turnstile, recognizing any undercover Popeye the owners would send to check up on this. He is single with 2 kids. Playboy sneakers and Seruchi jackets. How did he get in the biz? "When I was 18, I had 3 girls working for me. It got to be more trouble than it was worth. So I got myself a normal job here... Don't get mad when I kid around. I call Jose a bitch even though he's my best friend."

All these guys had been around since the days of early porno. John "got paid \$50 for the same 12 hour day in a movie." Hector worked at one of the city's first all male houses. "It had 3 balconies. It drew all kinna people. Girls, couples, lesbians, businessmen, all wanting to see what some guy stickin' his dick up another guy's ass looked like." Steve ran the machines at one of the now gone 16mm shoeboxes near the bus terminal. "There was this manager, Mo. He lived above the theater. A big man, 350 pounds. And Mo was bisexual and he'd have couples fuck in front of him and join in. He liked the guy more than the girl. One night he took \$1000 worth of door receipts and disappeared."

The Lounge is part of a theater chain staffed mostly with hispanics and owned by the company. Barbara, the office manager, attempts to main-





EXPLOITER

re: ease

n the facade of a friendly, family oriented business while calling. tor a "Latino monkey" behind his back. Alot of these Spanish guys e blood relatives. Jack has an Irish face and temper to match. supplies the theaters with financially successful S&M movies having erotic appeal of picking at a scab. He'll use John cheaply in a m because he knows he needs the bread. As a live show performer, broke the record by shooting his jism into the 3rd row of Popeyes. ce Kellin could have played the owner, Methusala incarnate. A millmaire slob complete with kinky white hair combed over bald spots, a rt and mole infested face, and a headache inducing voice. Chronic aplainer -- if the marquee lights are on, they should be off, wice ver-Unfortunately for the rest of the world, people like him never

Another of the company's theaters is a corroded movie palace from em to drop dead. e 40s. A long corridor lined with mirrors and porn movie posters ads in. Chandelier above caved in seats. Upstairs. The men's room, kempt, with the expected aroma of urine. Broken mirrors. Filthy les. A large projection room, turned into a hangout for characters a crash pad for creepy Haitian employees. 16mm projectors on 35 ands. Broken lockers, old chairs, used coffee cups. The show teams'

ressing room, smelling of perfume, sex and mold. Atop this was the old man, running the projectors or holding a flashlight. A Burroughs ightmare come to life. Lifelong junkie swaying to and fro. "I'm on the (Methadone) program." lasses magnifying his pinned eyes. John's Bargain Store wardrobe. Closet homosexual. Babbling onstantly. Emaciated physique fueled by coffee, donuts and cheap liquor. OTB addict. He may ave had a brain once, but now he's the old man.

There were some black guys who worked for the company. Always good to steal with (once veryone's over the paranoia of who's a company rat and who isn't). Kenny was the maintenance uy, always clad in running outfits. A 'Nam vet, "Goodbye Saigon" brought tears to his eyes. hat sort of sentimentality. Bobby was into Sly Stone and Frank Zappa. We both agreed There's a

Drugs were another fact of life at the Lounge. Basing largely replaced needles. A candy iot Goin' On was about speedballs. igh cosmetically like smoking from a water pipe, it encourages one to do more and more, unsuccessully trying to recapture that first rush. The crash is very depressing. Not my thing, but more han one live show performer had "a new house up that pipe." Goofball was the block's coke dealer. tall, thin West Indian with sunglasses and early 70s flair pants. Another basehead, he would sell stepped on or even beat in White Lady packets (those papers with a pyramid and palm trees) to support his habit. Whatever he had of a brain went up the pipe, turning him into "goo goo da da" is Hector aptly put it. A scumbag. Legal problems of selling coke were illustrated by one employse, a rice and beans heavyweight who based off 25 pounds before landing on the rock. He got framed in a phone call deal. "I speak in Spanish, so they'll never catch me."

Live shows drew the Popeyes as much as the splice ridden, 10 year old prints (including early Johnny Wadd stuff). Couples got \$20 a show. At the company's all male theater, guys got \$5 a dance. A 20 minute show consisted of the girl doing a strip, the guy joining her for a Kama Sutra style workout ending with/without a come shot, Lionel Richie or equivalent background music. Believe me, it takes concentration, with rows of Popeyes but a few feet away. Couples might do ? shows a day, sometimes pulling a 14 show double shift. Mostly black or hispanic, living together or married. Some 'Nam vets. A few ex-hardcore addicts, 10 bag a day types. One of these guys, doing shows with his blonde pinned eyed wife, looked like a porn version of Mad Max with his in-

tense gaze, leather jacket, and body covered with tattoos. He got off in the neck before going on Methadone. From his looks, you wouldn't want to mess with him, but he was pretty friendly. People all trying to survive, but some with show biz bravado. An older Spanish fellow boasted of coming during each show and different fucking styles depending on the audience-- "fast and rough for the young, slow and gentle for the old."

The glare of pornography, of exhibitionism and voyeurism as a way of life, took its toll. The employees were all sexually frustrated in one way or (OVER)





another, but they all had that anal sex thing, even though everyone was "straight." Hector: "I need some tight asshole." Steve: "I like to fuck women up the ass, grab the tits as I do it." Kenny: "When I just think of that brown eye, my dick gets hard as a rock." Bobby: "Flip 'em over." The sexual detatchment John and I have kept us out of this clamor. Every guy who worked at the Lounge was known to have fucked drag queens.

BESTMANCOLOR Working at the Lounge, day after day, becomes a monotone punctuated by little dramas or the es a monotone punctuated by little dramas or the not interesting enough to stop the ennui. The cashbox window looking out on the Korean guy, fat man, tourists, sparse street incidents. A void allowing any depressive personality to in its own juice. I've left this dollhouse, but right now Steve's changing a reel and Hectsworking the turnstile. They've been there for 10 years. It's just another day.

NE WANTS TO LOVE, NE WANTS TO KILL!

Two heads grafted to the body of a GIANT!

Charles B. Mylone's



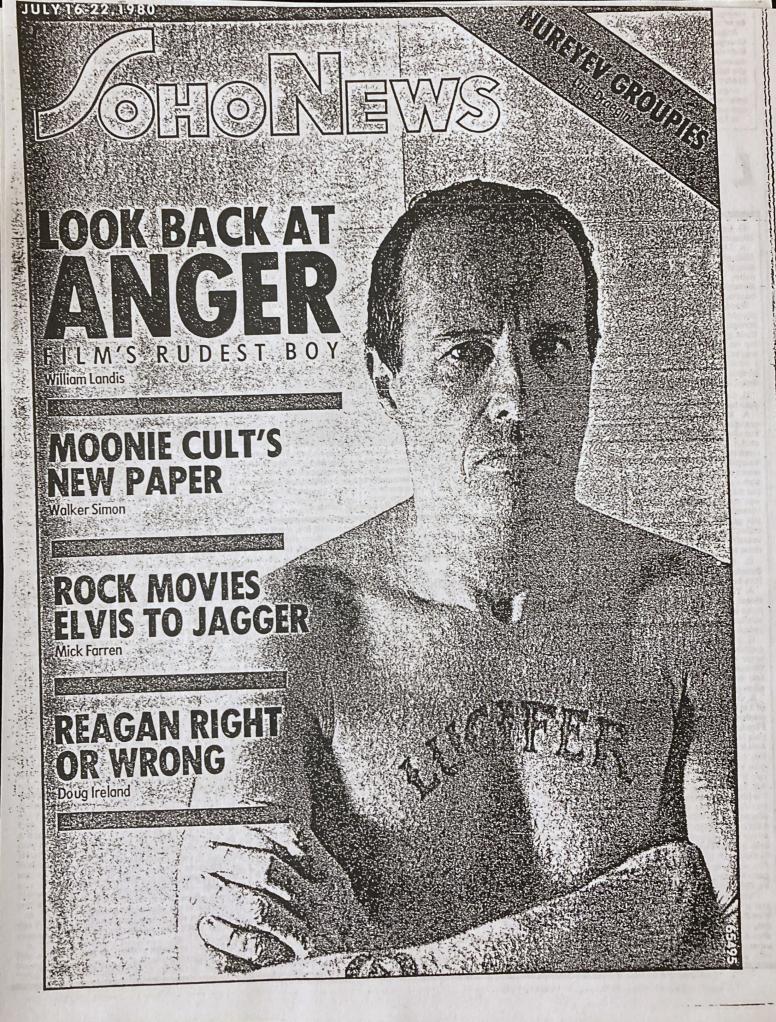
Starring: <u>Hellyweed Babylen</u> author Kenneth Anger <u>Bleedsucking Freaks</u> director Jeel M. Reed

as "Mr. Angereed"



(Alternative title: Strangers With No Brain)

DOUBLE SHOCKER SHOCK! YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES!



July 16,

The Soho News

nising, Anger has a body of work — and a diversity of interests — that reveal him to be an infinitely complex and unique artist.

Anger has been obsessed with film since the age of four, when he played the Changeling prince in the 1935 Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle version of A Midsummer Night's Dream. His grandmother, a costume mistress in the silent era, encouraged his passionate interest in cinema; instead of reading him fairy tales, she told him stories of early Hollywood scandals, many of which found their way into his book Hollywood Babylon.

Anger's parents, however, attempted to pressure him into becoming an aeronautical engineer, like his father and older brother. "I think I would have been I very good at making planes crash," Anger commented.

In 1947 Kenneth Anger made Fireworks, a dreamlike film dealing with homosex-

ritz, prompting Anger to move to Europe, where he felt his films would be more readily accepted. There he made Rabbit's Moon and Eaux d'Artifice.

In 1953, Anger returned briefly to the States and made Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome. He spent the rest of the '50s primarily in France, completing the first version of Hollywood Babylon and attempting to film The Story of O. Anger returned again to America in the '60s and made the classic Scorpio Rising, using members of a Brooklyn motorcycle gang. He also made Kustom Kar Kommandos, Invocation of My Demon Brother and a false start on the Lucifer Rising project.

Despite frequent financial difficulties, stylistic rip-offs by moviemakers in both Hollywood and the "underground" and the censure of film critics, Anger has produced an amazing body of work. He now resides in Yorkville, in a walk-up railroad apartment that he has transformed into his own Golden-Age-of-Hollywood palace; and he is planning a number of new projects.

LOOK BACK AT ANGER

Q. Let's start at the beginning - A Midsummer Night's Dream.

A. The one thing I remember about Midsummer Night's Dream is there was almost a catastrophe. The kids were nude and they were dressed in shredded cellophane like the moonbeams.

Suddenly — poof! — a moonbeam caught on fire, and the kids started to scream and screech. At the most, all of them got their butts singed a little bit. but no one got seriously burned but it was so thrilling to me. I said, "Oh gee — I would have done that on purpose," because that to me was absolutely magical.

Q. So what was it like growing into your teens in Hollywood back then?

A. Well, I was lucky to have a grandmother who had been around in the silent period and she told me wonderful stories about what Clara Bow used to do with her football team, Rudy Valentino's strange sort of dominant wives and things like that. She gave me some pieces of costume belonging to the silent stars like Betty Blythe, who was the Queen of Sheba, and Rudy Valentino, part of his turban. And I've still got them. It's a bit of a fetishistic collection of mine but I think they're as valuable as Napoleon's garters, maybe more so.

Q. So the seeds for Hollywood Babylon were sown when you were a little boy.

A. Yeah, and so it grew out of my interest in all this and of course I was more interested in what preceded me. I was fascinated by Lon Chaney, and the people of the silent days like Valentino.

Q. When you made Fireworks, what motivated you to make the film and what was the initial reaction to it? Whenever I describe that film to some-one who's been in the service, they often get infuriated.

A. Oh yes. Well, the interesting thing of it is when I first wanted to get the film printed back in '47, at the Consolidated Film Labs in Hollywood. And 1947 was only two years after the end of the war. And it so happened that the head of the film lab happened to be an ex-Navy man who had been head of documentary filmmaking in the Navy during the war. He was going to call the FBI, have the film seized as being subversive and anti-American as if it was Communist propaganda or something. I had to find a little fly-by-night lab to print it. It was never shown publicly in the early days until in 1949 I sent a print of it to a Jean Cocteau film festival in Biarritz. Fireworks won a prize which kind of gave me encouragement to go on making little private films.

Then I went over to London in 1950 and it was being shown at the Royal Film Society, which was at that time the only film society where art films were shown. And it was a very kind of stuffy organization interested in film as Art, i with a capital A. They thought they'r

were doing me a big favor showing the film. I remember during the show the wife of the ambassador, the Indian ambassador, got out of her seat about halfway through the movie, pointed at the screen and said, "That film should be burned," and stalked out of the theater. Which I thought was wonderful. If I'd paid her to do it it wouldn't have been nicer

Q. Was there any psychological need for you to make Fireworks?

A. Apparently, I mean, I made it as a statement of independence and rebellion against my family. My grandmother saw it. I showed it to her because, in a sense, she bought me the camera that I filmed it with. She didn't have any moral reaction like, "Oh, isn't that queer?" or "Isn't that peculiar?" or "Why is my grandson being beaten up by a bunch of sailors?" She thought it was a good movie — it was a movie that moved, it told a little story and she said "It's terrific," which I thought, for a lady in her late 70s, was pretty far out.

Q. What about Puce Women? A. Well, that was to be a film - I had

which is about 30 miles from Rome. In 1 out and and they drown him. the 16th century there was a very decadent teenager who was the youngest son of the d'Este family who, because of the way the Italian families did it at that time - you know, the members of the aristocracy — became a cardinal in the Catholic Church. The oldest son was always destined to become a military person, and the youngest son or next youngest son if they had more sons than two, was automatically destined to go into the church whether they were suited for it or not. And so this younger son who was a sexual pervert - there are very few things II call sexual perversion but he liked to fuck goats.

Any rate, this teenager became a cardinal through no fault of his own. But he loved the drag. He loved swishing around in his big red capes and red hats. And so he built Tivoli with this limitless money and a lot of church money which he siphoned off. He was into water sports. He liked being pissed

Q. By goats or humans?

"My grandmother thought Fireworks was a good movie. She didn't have any moral reaction like, 'Why is my grandson being beaten up by a bunch of sailors'. . . "

WILLIAM Z. LANDIS

planned it right before I went to France on the women in Hollywood in the 1920s. It was to be a study of their lifestyles, their clothes, their cars, their houses, their social patterns, but like the play, *The Women*, it would have an all-women cast, not a man not even a male cat — in it. My grandmother had unfortunately died the year before and she would have probably given me the money. I only made a little tiny piece of it.

Q. Who was the woman who appears in it?

A. Oh, her name is Yvonne Marquis and she's a good friend of mine. After the film was made, she went to Mexico I and became the mistress of President I Aleman, who was one of the dictators of Mexico for a while.

Q. What can you tell us about Eaux d'Artifice?

A. I was living in Rome in 1953 and I decided I wanted to make a film on though he's hidden in a place under a lot of the 60s trip movies.

The dardens of the Villa d'Este in Tivoti?

A. By goats, men, women, I don't know, whoever's capable of pissing. So this whole garden is actually a dirty joke.

Q. A paen to his water sports.

Yeah. And my film, d'Artifice, was supposed to be the first part of a four-part work. It would become progressively more and more raunchy. The first part, which is the only part I made, Eaux d'Artifice, would just have a figure running through the garden and acting like she's being scared of these satyrs and things and monsters. The second part, she undresses and you see that she's a transvestite, that she really is a teenage boy. This time, a whole bunch of people - it's hide and seek - including soldiers with torches and spears are running through the whole garden trying to find her. And the end

Then the third part begins - they pull him out, give him the kiss of life and bring him back to life. And then there's this incredible orgy. And so the third part is nothing but a sex film. The fourth part is dawn and the Pope comes and blesses the garden while the servants are sweeping up the remnants of the orgy - you know, torn panties and that sort of thing.

Q. Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome is where Aleister Crowley really asserts

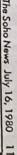
A. Yes, even though I was collecting Crowley since I was a teenager. When I went back to California after being away for about four years I met the widow of Crowley's godson. He was a brilliant scientist who had been working for Jet Propulsion Labs. He invented the jet fuel which took the Saturn rocket to the moon. Hughes said, "I want you to work for me. I will pay you whatever you want. I will give you a house and give you bodyguards and give you boayguarus and give you boayguarus and give you blah blah. But you will work exclusively for Howard Hughes." So John Parsons said "Thanks, but no thanks." And so, a month later — he lived in Pasadena — he was walking down to visit a friend that lived a few blocks away. A limousine pulled up with black windows. Two strongarm types got out, picked him up and put him in the limousine between other

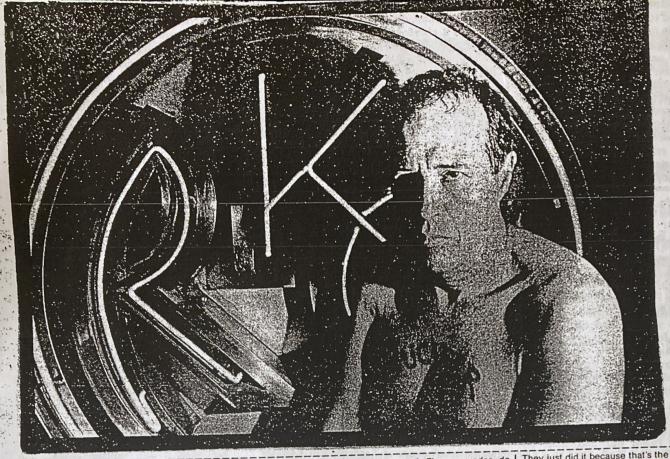
They said, "Are you sure you don't want to work for Howard Hughes? We've investigated you and we know you've been doing secret research on this fuel and that fuel and that we want to have the exclusive...." "Well, this sounds like a Hollywood scenario." He was very blase. Parsons went inside and he said to Margerie, We're packing tonight and we're leaving tomorrow. We're leaving for Mexico. Don't ask questions. I have to go down to the basement where I have my private lab and destroy my notes, clear that thing up." Well, at 10 o'clock in the morning, she went to do some shopping. And she was just finished paying for the things when she heard a tremendous explosion. She ran all the way back home and there was nothing left of the house. The case was never solved. Jack Parsons was killed. .

Q. Was the case ever connected by anyone to Hughes?

A. No . . . no . . .

At any rate, with the money from cashing in my mother's securities that were left to me, I made Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome with Margerie Cameron, who is the red-haired woman in the film — the scarlet woman — Jack Parson's widow. It was made mainly as a showcase to her, much to the chagrin of Anais Nin, who thought she was the star. So that's the interesting back-





people partake of a hallucinogenic drug. My use of color and everything is extremely intense. In fact, the film looks very good on acid if it's good acid. Its advertised opening said, "Drop your acid and see the movie" because acid wasn't illegal yet. About two months later it was illegal and they had lines around the block. Unfortunately, they also had people vomiting in the aisles some people didn't know how to handle their acid.

Q. Pleasure Dome got you more recognition than your other films, in a

A. Up to that point. Fireworks got considerable notoriety, won some prizes and so forth. Then a few years later Scorpio Rising came along; that was the most widely shown of my films.

Q. What did you do between Scorpio Rising and Pleasure Dome? What sort of projects were you involved in?

A. In the mid and late '50s, I was back in France. In 1958, my first edition of Hollywood Babylon was published in Paris by the editor Jean Jacques Pauvert. I wrote it in French because French' is my second language. My family was trying to force me to return to America by squeezing my allowance and cutting me down. I had to find a way to supplement my income while living in Paris. I told a number of people at the Cahiers du Cinema stories about old Hollywood scandals and stuff like that. They said, "Why don't you put it in a book?" So I went to practically the only sort of far-out editor - there's two, Girodias, who was doing the Olympia Press pornography, and Pauvert who was doing very artistic erotic books so I went to Pauvert and he published Hollywood Babylon, which sold quite well in France.

Q. What are the differences between the French version and the American version?

A. The way it finally happened was that some friends bought the book in French, thought it was a gas and said, Why don't you do it in this country?" Among them was Jonathan Cott, one of the editors of Rolling Stone magazine. We get along, understand each other on certain wavelengths because he's a specialist in Victorian fairytales. He could also see that many of these Hollywood tragedies and scandals have elements in them like traditional fairytales. He knew I was up shit creek money-wise again and needed more money as usual for a film project or something as usual. So he said, "Why don't you do Hollywood Babylon over here?" But, in the meantime. I had a But, in the meantime, I had a project which I devoted a lot of effort to in France with the okay of the publisher and I only filmed 20 minutes of it. That was a 16mm black-and-white version of The Story of O.

Q. Was it literally The Story of O, very faithful to the book?

A. Yes.

Q. Did it show any explicit sadomasochistic action?

A. Very little. It showed bruises and things like that. But it was done consciously emulated another film-maker rather than my own style. It was done in the style of Bresson. He did a classic film during the occupation of France called *The Woman of the Boulogne Wood.* It's taken from an anecdote, a short story by Diderot in the 18th century turned into modern times. It's a wonderful plot. It's done in a very cool way. In other words, there's no sex in the film, no explicit sex of any kind, but people go into the bedroom and close the door. Everything is done with locks, with slightly raised eyebrows — it's just a brilliant film.

Q. So you tried to do Story of O that

A. Well, I didn't try, I did. But I only did 20 minutes.

Q. Where is that film today?

A. In France. It's being looked after by the Cinematique Français. I can't bring it in this country or even take it out of there because the French secret police want to confiscate it because the girl that plays O was the daughter of

the Minister of Finance under de Gaulle and it is considered a political embarrassment that she did it. She was 20 when she did it, which in France is legal age, but her parents were extremely upset when they heard that she was doing an erotic film which they considered a pornographic film, in spite of the fact that there were no there was nudity in the film but no explicit sex scenes and no explicit S/M violence.

It was my own style, but it was suggested to me by Bresson and his, the super discretion. Which I, like Von Sternberg, find much more erotic than explicit things. Explicit sex on the screen is like watching an eye opera-

Q. You don't connect much with explicit movies by guys like Fred Halsted Imaker of LA Plays Itself, Sextool and Sex Garage] then?

Q. Sometimes Fred Halsted is compared to you.

A. I don't care.

Q. Have you ever seen any of his films?

A. I know Fred. He's on a colossal ego trip and he thinks he's the most beautiful hunk around, but he's already 36. And he will have to go through the same changes like John Rechy of City of Night. I was never a narcissist and it's very hard for those who are hardcore narcissists to see that they go into a bar and people's heads no longer turn. So that's why I just wait. No, I don't dislike Fred.

Q. In Scorpio Rising, the bikers that you used - a real motorcycle club were they aware of the implications of what they were doing?

A. They were perfect actors for me because they lived in a state of wonderful innocence. They would do things and they wouldn't say, like, shouldn't do this because maybe I'm going to get married two years from now and there's going to be this picture of daddy getting fucked in the ass."

They just did it because that's the way they were, but these guys were not gay, not queer, not homosexual. Their girlfriends were present during nearly all of the filming. And they were gossip-ing and laughing and the girlfriends thought it was a big riot. Everybody was heavily stoned and drunk on beer, so everybody had a good time.

Q. They were like a little club, not really Hell's Angels.

A. Yeah. Not really, not anything like Hell's Angels. They weren't into any heavy trips of murder or drug dealing or fencing stolen cars like the Hell's Angels were doing. They weren't even into a dress-up trip. I mean, they had a few leather jackets and chains. If you told them, "Hey, you must be kinky sexually wearing those chains on the middle and right arm side and leather jackets and tight Levis and engineer boots," they would have knocked your block off. I admire that. They're genuine people. I like that much better than a stockbroker who on a weekend will go to the Pleasure Chest and buy a leather bikini and tit clamps, you know, and pay \$75 for them.

Q. I've heard a lot about business people who do that.

A. Of course. In a way, it's an escape from a boring job. Being a stockbroker is not the world's trippiest thing to be. Even if it pays well and even if there's infinite opportunity for cheating, which they discover, most of them, later.

Q. Let's now get into the Lucifer What about . Bobby odvssev. Beausoleil?

A. He was my boyfriend and my discovery when he was 18 or 19 in the Haight-Ashbury.

Q. A personification of androgynous masculinity?

A. No, he wasn't even androgynous. He's very masculine. The reason our relationship fell apart is he was impatient. I didn't - couldn't - raise enough money to film it fast enough for him. And he was always telling me 'Let's get the show on the road."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Well, Matthew Diamond didn t have a Cecil Beaton on hand to make such lovely chilling points for his new Thriller. As for violence, however, Diamond is one up on Ashton. Instead of using an impersonal weapon like a pistol, Diamond has the hero (which he played) get it with a knife. You see the girlfriend scrape his neck with it, and you see a goodly amount of red stuff pour from his neck at the appropriate moment. It's close-up violence, and you're supposed to react the way you do when you see it on the silver screen: with pleasurable repulsion. Much as I ap-

Long Legs and shent movie as well, has to do with a kind of mindlessness of dance matter. Here's a choreographer who has taken it upon himself to form a new company, Diamond, which made its official debut at the Pillow. In these days of dwindling financial resources, forming a new company seems especially brave and bespeaks a pressing artistic point of view. After seeing three examples of the new company's repertory, the question of point of view became moot. The big one is, why is Diamond drawn to choreointeresting mix of shapes and sizes and all have good faces for the stage. Did Diamond pick his group as one might choose an all-purpose summer stock company? Is Diamond, in fact, more interested in theater than in dance? Because for, the life of me, I couldn't figure out why those people were moving. There was no idea which needed to be choreographed, and the ideas themselves were subinfantile. But, boy, was it all polished. Vacuity with zip — that is sleaze-plus.

Diamond (company and choreographer)

contrast: moveme dance of tains ger But in th the Was yet gaul small st dancers dances 1 less res Goh. I l quaintar

ANGER

Continued from page 11

threw him out in '67 just after the autumn of Equinox. He always had a knife on him, but nevertheless I picked him up and threw him down the stairs because I'm that way - I'm like King Kong when I get mad. So he then came back, kicked in the door of my studio and stole all the film we'd shot except a few scraps that were in the cutting bin Which, from the scraps, I made Invocation, as defiance, to show I could make something even from that. He stole my truck after he stole the film. The truck broke down in the San Fernando Valley in front of the Spahn ranch. He was tinkering with the motor when six of the Manson groupies came out and said, "Hey, you're a cute kid, why don't you spend the night with us?" And he was such a good lay - and Charlie was turned on to him too because Charlie's bisexual - that they said, "Hey, move in with us, man." And that's how he got mixed up with the Manson family.

Q. You've been ripped off so many times and not gotten credit by Hollywood and other people. I can understand your disgust with the film industry.

A. Yeah. Well, the people that have ripped me off in Hollywood are Dennis Hopper, Roger Corman, Marty Scorsese also that fucking Lucas and Spielberg. Spielberg gave me that monkey that's in Close Encounters - that's the only thing he's ever done for me and Marty Scorsese is the only one that's acknowledged, at least to me, never in print, that he said, "I do owe you a debt. If I hadn't seen Scorpio fairly early on, I would never have thought of using pop music the way I did later." And so he said, "Thanks!" And so

Q. "Very nice of you."

A. Well, you see nobody in Hollywood has ever offered me a contract. Nobody has ever said, "Why don't you make a quickie little horror film?" You see, I have what is known as Satanic Pride - if you read Paradise Lost by Milton you know what I'm talking about. I'd love to work in 35mm. In fact my dream of heaven is working in 70mm.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

film in 35mm. Two projects now are very close to documentaries, though the way I do them they won't be documentaries. Last year, I got a National Endowment of the Arts grant - only 10 grand but I had lab debts of 12 grand, so all I did was pay off some past debts. But I would like to do a film on old movie houses. I would need two or three grants - 10 grand is not enough - I want to travel from coast to coast and film the best examples all over the country, That's one project, which may or may not happen. I don't want to end up and do a little 10-minute film on one theater, say, in Tampa, which is a gorgeous little theater, or the Albuquerque, which I just saw, which is decorated in American Indian style. I mean, it's so incredible. I don't want to do that. I want to show the whole range and spectrum of these incredible sort of dream architectures, places which are being torn down at a very rapid rate.

I think it's a commercial idea, at least for something like Public Television. Probably somebody else will do it, because several of my ideas have been stolen by other people and it ends up being done in a schlocky way by some nerd and this has happened several times, which is my own fault since I've shafted myself but....

Then I also want to do a film which will be a documentary because it will be a study in very heavy fantasy, on the world's largest Mickey Mouse collection, which is owned by a friend of mine.

Q. I see quite a few Mickies around your house.

A. Well, I only have a few. I gave him some of my best things. But Mickey's a big thing - early Mickey, it has to be up to 1935. From 1928 to 1935, then they wrecked it and by the time of Fantasia, it's not Mickey at all but it's a little boy with eyeballs. And it's a bad little boy; that's no longer a nasty little mouse, you know, a baby rat doing really nasty things. He was very sadistic - in Steamboat Bill he's pulling the teats of the cow, he's pulling the tongue of the goat.

Q. He's real funny.

A. Because this is real pratfall humor. Later on they turn him into a sissy, which is unforgivable — Disney is one of my — I. hope I'll meet him in Hell and I can kick A. Well, you know, I'd love to make a him in the balls.

IRELAND

Continued from page 7

In fact, although liberal Democrats "may have prided themselves on how cleverly they co-opted the right, in actuality they paid a high price, for they were forced to become more conservative and bellicose in order to keep the right's support Carter has not seen that concessions to the cold warriors make them seem stronger, not weaker."

In charting the peaks and valleys of anti-Soviet hostility, Wolfe notes that "the former are dominated by Democrats pursuing cold war liberal policies, [while] the latter are dominated by Republicans with a different political agenda. . . . A genuinely conservative administration did not need the image of a hostile Soviet threat in the same way that a would-be conservative one did." Thus, the Cold war relaxed under Eisenhower and Nixon, who did not have to fear the right, and heated up under Truman, Kennedy, Johnson and Carter, all of whom did.

Ronald Reagan's pledge to rebuild a "Fortress America" and insure military "superiority" (a chimera in the nuclear age) are in essence the reflections of a nostalgio cesses a ments of under p provoke Soviet r crisis. A Ranger more th crazv. It is d Reagan starts (

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See for yourself in "NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES" with

co-feature "THE LAST SURVIVOR" -MARCH 9

3/4 & 3/5 — JOHN WATERS CLASSICS 3/15 — WOMEN IN CHAINS

Pink Flamingos Female Trouble

3/6 - ALL-MALE • Demi-Gods

- . The Back Row
- . Wanted: Billy The Kid

3/7 - SEXPLOITATION

- Camille 2000
- . The Queen

3/8 — GIRLS IN THE BIG HOUSE

- The Big Doll House
- . The Big Bust Out

3/9 - IMPORTED BLOODY HORROR

Night of The Bloody Apes

3/10 - EARLY RUSS MEYER

The Last Survivor

Good Morning—and Goodbye! Common Law Cabin

3/11 & 3/12 — FEMALE REVENGE

- I Splt on Your Grave
- . Axe

3/13 — ANDY MILLIGAN HORROR

- Bloodthirsty Butchers
 The Man With Two Heads

3/14 — MONDO GROSS OUTS

- · Africa Addio
- Mondo Cane

DRIVE-INS IN THE DEEP SOUTH

The Big Bird Cage
The Girl in Room 2A

3/16 — WEST COAST SEX & HORROR

- · The Love Butcher
- · Love Camp Seven

3/17 - EARLY GORE

- The Ghastly Ones
- · Headless Eyes

3/18 & 3/19 — ILSA!!!

- ILSA-She Wolf of the SS
 ILSA-Harem Keeper of The Oil Shelks

3/20 — LOW BUDGET HORROR

- I Drink Your Blood
- Don't Look in The Basement

3/21 — EARLY RUSS MEYER

- · Finder's Keepers, Lovers Weepers
- · Cherry, Harry, & Roquel

3/22 - RACIALLY ORIENTED

- · Fight for Your Life
- · Black Shampoo

3/23 - RADLEY METZGER CLASSICS

- The Lickerish Quartet
- · Carmen, Baby

3/24 — IDIOT HORROR

The Drive-In Massacre





FIND OUT - MARCH 17th in- THE GHASTLY ONES

Divine opens 8th St. Playhouse' SLEAZE FEST in "PINK FLAMINGOS" & "FEMALE TROUBLE" March 4th and 5th

DLUS! MIDNIGHT SHOWS EVERY NIGHT

National STAR

The Weirder It Was... The More They Enjoyed It!

RI. & SAT.-3/4 & 3/5 - JOHN WATERS

PINK FLAMINGOS 3:00,6:30,10:00
From licking furniture to turds in the mail, it's the Divine clan vs. the Marbles in this sidesplitting sleaze classic.

• FEMALE TROUBLE 4:45,8:15

Divine is brilliant in this biography of Dawn Davenport, who goes from charcha heels to mass murderer. John Waters' grimmest satire.

SUNDAY-3/6-ALL-MALE

DEMI-GODS
 4:50,8:15
 A strangely delightful animated look at the decline and fall of the modern world. See movie auperatars in very compromising positions

THE BACK ROW
 2:00,5:20,8:50
 The classic film with the hottest stars. Casey Donovan and George Payne sleaze it up in a (cops!) movie theatre.

WANTED: BILLY THE KID 3:30,6:45,10:20
The All-American dream turned hustler. Down and very dirty.

MONDAY—3/7—SEXPLOITATION

CAMILLE 2000 6:00,9:00
 Metzger's lush, expensive (\$500,000) sexploitation treatment of the Dumas story, updated to contemporary

THE QUEEN
 7:40,10:35
 Pioneering exploitation documentary dealing with the Miss America contest for transvestites.

TUESDAY-3/8-GIRLS IN THE BIG HOUSE

THE BIG DOLL HOUSE
 5:00,8:00
 The classic New World women's prison film. A beautiful
 -est (led by Pam Grier), lots of S&M, and graphic violence.

• 1HE 3HG BUST OUT

After escaping from a prison with a sadistic matron, seven women battle nuns, the military and white slavers in this New World release.

WEDNESDAY-3/9-IMPORTED HORROR

NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES 5:40,8:40
An LSD hallucination of a monster movie as a doctor
gives his dying son a gorilla's heart, turning him into
guesas what? Actual scenes of open heart surgery amidst
scalpings, eye gougings and mutilations.

THE LAST SURVIVOR
 7:10,10:10
 A plane crash survivor is captured by and battles a can nibal tribe in this cinemascope stomach turner. Some violence is real.

THURSDAY-3/10-EARLY RUSS MEYERS

GOOD MORIUMG-AND GOODEYE! 7:40,10:15

Russ Meyer's most mean flick, super busty, super bitch viciously confronts impotent or inexhaustible men.

COMMON LAW CABIN
 6:10,9:10
 An ex-detective vs. three Amazons on an Arizona dude ranch, resulting in the standard seduction, rape and murder.

Playboy Hairdresser Held Hostage!



•For the whole story see "BLACK SHAMPOO" - March 22 with co-hit "Fight For Your Life." Anything goes — and everything usually does—



March 14th with co-feature ''Africa Addio''



FILMS NOT SEEN OUTSIDE OF DRIVE-INS IN THE DEEP SOUTH

FRI., SAT. -3/11 & 3/12-FEMALE REVENGE

I SPHT ON YOUR GRAVE
 3:45,6:50,10:00
 Blasted by "Sneak Previews" Roger Siskel and Gene
 Ebert as Dog of the Year. A gang rape by four louts and
 how she gets even. Rare in exploitation films is its focus
 on the woman prevailing.

AXE
 Three queer bashers find themselves no match for a slightly unbalanced teenage girl.

SUNDAY-3/13-A. MILLIGAN HORROR

BLOODTHIRSTY BUTCHERS 5:40,8:40
 Sweeney Todd gets the Andy Milligan treatment, complete with throat slittings, fingers amputated and a tit nie.

THE MAN WITH TWO HEADS 7:10,10:10
Milligan and his 16mm camera tackle Dr. Jekyll and Mr.
Hyde with the unexpected heavy bloodletting. Like its cofeature, it was actually shot on location in London

MONDAY-3/14-MONDO GROSS OUTS

AFRICA ADDIO
 7:50

 The men who made "Mondo Cane" bring you, according to the N.Y. Times, "slaughter—hideous and horrible of animals, human beings, social institutions." Nuff said.

MONDO CAME
6:00,10:00
Sarcastic narration, nauseating real sequences and clod
dish staged ones mark this exploitation archetype.

TUESDAY-3/15-WOMEN IN CHAINS

THE BIG BIRD CAGE
 6:45,10:10
The second New World women's prison movie in which oversexed beauties are forced to toil in a giant sugar mill by obese homosexual guards.

THE GIRL IN ROOM 2A
 S:00,8:25
 A twisted mixture of S & M and gore as a Nietzean cult has its own methods for treating female ex-cons.

WEDNESDAY-3/16-W. COAST HORROR

THE LOVE BUTCHER
 5:20,8:30
 An ugly, crippled gardener transforms himself and then seduces and murders Beveriy Hills housewives.
 Tacky derived plot, pseudo-slick execution, and fake-

• LOVE CAMP 7

G:50,10:00

Jewish film distributors playing Nazi brass indulge in domination games with pretty soft core porn starlets. Laughably vulgar Ilsa precursor.

THURSDAY-3/17-EARLY GORE

THE GHASTLY ONES
 5:50,8:50
 An Andy Milligan gore epic, shot in 16mm on Staten Island. Victorian era inheritance murders, garnished with a variety of stabbings, outpouring entrails and a head in a salad bowl.

THE HEADLESS EYES
 7:20,10:20
 While robbing a woman, the theils eye is gouged out with
 a spoon. The overly sensitive crook then kills and gouges
 out the eyes of fourteen women in this sick piece of
 obscurity.

FRI. & SAT.-3/18 & 3/19-ILSA!

ILSA-SHE WOLF OF THE SS 3:10,6:25,9:45
 Ace dominitrix Ilsa castrates men and mutilates the female inmates of a concentration camp during "experiments" in one of the most powerful, gruesome and perverse sleaze films ever. Uncut.

ILSA-HAREM KEEPER OF THE OIL SHERKS 4:50,8:10
 Ilsa's perfectly preserved in the OPEC 70s, using her tactics to control the busty members of an oil magnate harem. A Henry Kissinger lookalike depicted as a chicken bunt.

SUNDAY-3/20-LOW BUDGET HORROR

• I DRINK YOUR BLOOD 2:30,5:30,8:45

Manson-like hippie band eats meat pies tainted with
rabies. Not desirable as neighbors. As funny as it is
graphically violent.

DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT 3:55,7:65,10:10
Blockhead cast members run amok as asylum inmates
who have killed their keepers.

MONDAY-3/21-EARLY RUSS MEYERS

FINDERS KEEPERS, LOVERS WEEPERS 6:20,9:00
 Strip joint owners, cheating husbands and wives, and hoods are crammed together in this hyperactive Meyer mix of sex and brutality.

CHERRY, HARRY & RAQUEL
 S:00,7:40,10:20
 Written by Tom Wolfe, this is Meyer's psychedelic opus.
 Biockhead actor par excellance. Charles Napier plays an
 Arizona sheriff entangled in pot amuggling and endless
menages.

TUESDAY-3/22-RACIALLY ORIENTED

• FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE
7:10,10:10
A black family with pictures of Martin Luther King and
JFK is held hostage by a trio of escaped cons – a white
hillbilly, a Puerto Rican, an Oriental – in this equal opportunity lawer prior

BLACK SHAMPOO
 5:40,8:40

 This deranged blaxploitation flick opens with a black
 Warren Beatty lookalike and closes with two men
 fighting with chainsaws.

WEDNESDAY-3/23-RADLEY METZGER

• THE LICKERISH QUARTET

5:10,8:30

The quintessential Radley Metzger film, the girl, the boy, the man and the woman go through a variety of seductions against pop art, cinemascope backrounds.

CARMEN, BABY
 6:50,10:10
 Metager's recasting of Bizet's opera in overtly sexual and melodramatic terms. Sexy, funny and his first big hit.

THURSDAY—3/24—IDIOT HORROR

THE DRIVE-IN MASSACRE
 Cops in drag, bald men with loud jewelry, geek janitors of a drive-in are all part of the repetitive unreleating nightmare of this summer regular.

I DISMEMBER MAMA
 8:20,10:20

Zooey Hall plays a man released from a mental institution who begins to kill again in this psychotic low budgeter.

GEORGE PAYNE SUPERSTAR

George Payne is one of the most durable veteran actors of hardcore pornography. His 15 ir career has run the gamut: fifty features, several loops, straight, all male, kink, some git work. His reputation as a sex symbol for other males in the 70s was primarily due to) films. The Back Row, a Sleaze Festival selection, was one of the first films to deal with blic sex places. Kiss Today Goodbye had a pinup type photo of him in its ads, which ran in New York Times before they refused such porn promotion. Currently, his psycho routine, nsisting of contorted faces, manic speech, and a twisted laugh, is immediately recognizable Phil Prince's 16mm straight S&M features (The Taming of Rebecca, Kneel Before Me) and other

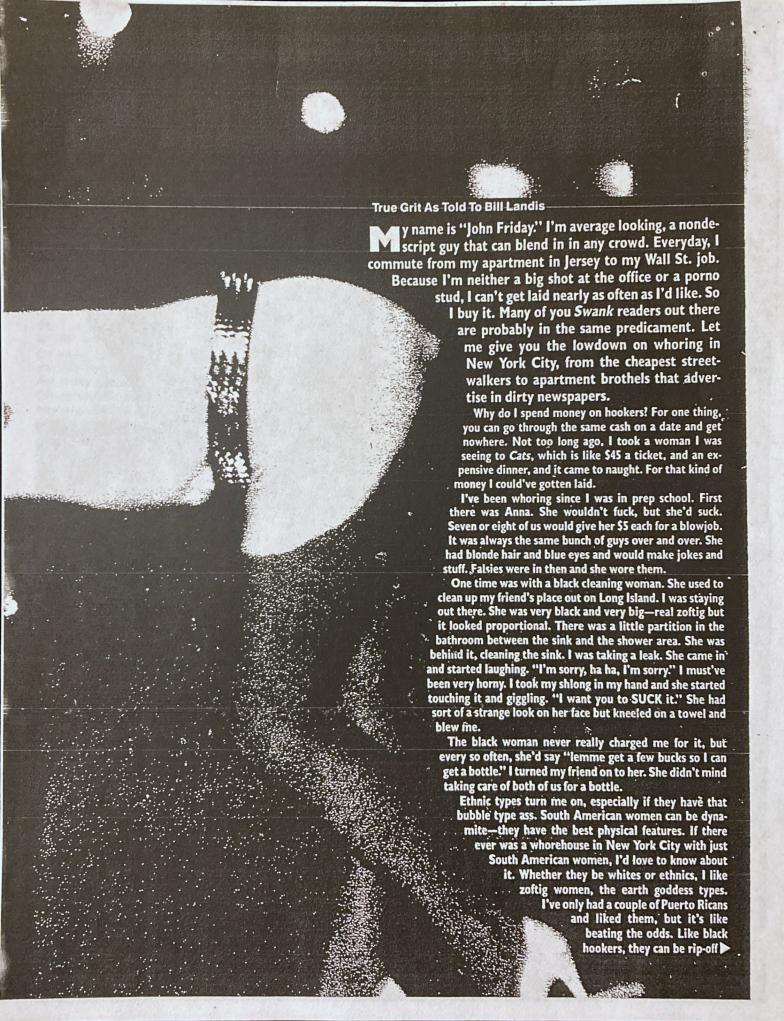
George is very handsome, with an almost perfect body. By his own description, he's "5'7", 8"; 140; dark hair, starting to get some grey, finally; hazel orange eyes." He doesn't look rdcore releases. arly as old as "a good 38." He has an uncanny ability to change looks: shag hair, beard, ow) clean shaven. Very hyper and intense, but with an unforced masculinity. When he mentmed that he was married during the shooting of The Back Row and that he "didn't do much" in .. I knew we were both products of the same male sexual mythology. This man has seen and me alot, some of which he is reluctant to get detailed about with a tape recorder on. The sterview was conducted on a 90 degree plus July day at the Doll Theater. A small Times Square rea house, it alternates second run Frince flicks with live sex shows, mostly of black and panish couples fucking with Lionel Richie as background noise.

- L: You've been doing this 15 years. You're kind of indestructible. How did you start?
- F: It'll be 16 years Halloween. My first movie was Halloween 1967. This girl didn't show p on the set, so they used a blow up doll. It was 12 hours. The rate then was \$50 a day, ut \$50 bought alot more than it does today. I've done a variety of films. I've done some egitimate work. I've been in Kojak in the mid 70s. I've been in the first Death Wish with harles Bronson. But after 14, 15 years in the business, I started working with Avon Froductons. I'd like to thank Fhil (Prince), Stella (Stevens), and Honeybee, who's the P/A. I tarted to do a semi-psycho role and people say "you're going to burn out." I say "I've been n this business 15 years, how am I going to burn out?" You see, everyone remembers an asshole.
- L: How does it feel to be a crossover star, coming from The Back Row and kiss Today Goodbye?
- P: I don't like doing gay films. I've made 8 or 9 at the most gay films in 16 years. The reason I don't do may is they're egomaniacs. I did The Back Row with Casey Donovan -- he's an excellent actor. I did Kiss Today Goodbye, Navy Blue. I did a movie called Centurians of Rome which is now owned by Lloyds of London. John Christopher did that -- it's a good one. I fistfucked some guy in that and they had to cut half of it.
- BL: How do you keep erections?
- Well, people ask me "what do I fantasize about?" I've been in the business so long. Well, what I think about is a Grant or a Franklin. They say "what do you mean?" Well, it's money, bills. I think about jerking off on it. men it's over, I can wipe my ass with it, do anything I want with it.
- You're straight or gay?
- Straight. GP:
- In that case, who gives better head technically: Faggots or women? BL:
- Women.
- How do you like anal sex?

- y. I mean, some people get off on enemas, scat, shit. That's not my bag. I've never got fucked in the ass... I started having sex when I was 7. I had no choice. With a woman, wither I did it right or wrong, she beat me until I got it right. Very sick. This went on 9 years. I was 16 when I finally quit.
- What kind of bread do you make?
- I've been doing this a long time. I did it basically for my family. Feople say "you ke big money." That's a joke. It's bullshit. \$4,000, \$5,000 a year. Feople say "how do u live?" I say "barely." It's not that I'm cheap, it's that I'm frugal. People say "do u do drugs?"--no; "do you drink?"--very rarely... I supported my family for a long time. was sick for a while. I was in the hospital for kidney stones. I've had ulcers since I was . My diet is a joke. I live on Coca Cola, coffee and cigarettes. I have no appetite. When was a bodybuilder years ago, I weighed 210.
- : You're known to do anything for a price. What are some of the freakler things you've done r films?
- Not much. In The Taming of Rebecca, there's a tit piercing scene. The actress is Velvet mmers. I do action films, S&M, but it's not... You'd have to see it. It's hard to explain. ve been getting hate mail. In The Punishment of Prunella, I play an escapee from prison. 's a good film. There's some torture in it. "Make the little girl beg... please daddy ease." (laughs)
- Have you ever worked for escort services?
- Oh sure. All sorts of scenes. Hasn't everybody?.. I didn't get alot of work with cerin producers in this town. They think I'm boring, burnt out, a few other things. My reputaon is--I've been married three times. Right now I'm not going out with anybody. I guess at's the way it's going to be.
- .: How did you develop your maniac routine?
- : It's acting. Well, it is. You gag and choke.
- .: How big is your dick?
- ': I never measured it. No matter how you look at it, people want to see fucking, hardcore. th S&M, it's different. In 1967, when I started in this business, I said people are into ppy horseshit and space dust. Today I say the same thing.
- .. Did you always want to be an actor?
- ': No. I was a pre-med major. I was going to be a doctor. I left school in '66.
- .: What movies have you seen that you liked?
- Return of the Jedi. People are going to laugh, but my favorite character was Celatius rumb. It's this little character that looks like one of the muppets that laughs. He's got lis laugh that's fantastic. Twilight Zone--it's a shame vic Morrow died. The best all time vie I like is El Topo--the mole. The concept was fantastic. Jodorowsky did a beautiful job it... I've done roles where people want me to desecrate religions. I won't do that. It's ot because I'm Catholic. I don't like knocking someone's religion.
- .. Are you happy?
- No, but that's life. People say "why do you live like that?" I say I was born by myself at I'll die by myself.

THE SIORTING

The Down 'n Dirty Truth About NYC Hookers—From The Cheapest Streetwalkers To The Fanciest Call Girls





Continued from page 21

artists, or will try to rush you.

I've been going to the ads in Screw for years the apartment brothels. "Like big tits? Call Sandy." "For a private, unrushed, unhurried hour-Julia." "Jill-blonde all over." When you call up, you'll get somebody like a phone girl and they know what the hell you're doing. The girl in the ad doesn't work there anymore or is a phony name, but that's who you ask for. Alot of the time, the phone girl will say "we have lovely girls." "What time can I come over?" Then they'll quote me a price and tell what they have to offer: straight, French, 69, and everything else you can dream of. I've heard between the tits called both Spanish and Swedish fucking. Alot of starting prices are \$100, some even \$130. Cheaper ones with any quality are \$80 for the hour or about half for the half hour. I always ask ments who have made sex a very beautiful act. You have also got your typical scumbags who you're lucky to come with even once. I come once, maybe twice in a session-I never go for a half hour session because I'd feel too rushed. One of the best girls blew me off, sucking me, milking my bags, until I felt drained afterwards. I had one of those loads that you feel you've saved for three years. Sometimes, it's not wise to go with the best looking woman in the group, like this one girl in a high class place-I offered her \$22 to let me fuck her without a bag and no way would she do it. Older women know how to do it better and know how to do more exciting things. Go to the same girl in a place if she knows you-she knows you're a steady. You see some of the same girls working at these places

The physical pleasure of sex is very brief. How long does the actual moment of ecstasy of an orgasm last? Fantasy can make sex exciting. Garter belts, hats, lingerie all turn me on. In one house, I had a Marilyn Monroe type girl play secretary for me. I could go pinch her while she was typing, things like that. It was great but expensive.



if there's tipping, because I find it very embarrassing when the woman wants another tip.

These brothels are mostly uptown, past the 40s, between 2nd and 3rd Aves.

It's not a warm experience. You point out a girl—alot without sex appeal because they've already had three or four guys that day—and she goes to a room with you. She tells you to "make yourself comfortable," which means to take off your clothes, so they know you're not a cop. The room is either overly lit or dim. There's usually no place to hang your clothes. In five minutes, the girl will come back. "Hi. What's your pleasure?" The nicest one came up to me—I was naked—and patted my penis. She said in an overdramatic way, "Whaaat doo yoooouuu waannt?" She'll proceed to do whatever sexual act you discuss. You can always talk girls into not making you wear a bag. They'll get an extra tip that way.

Once in a while, I've met girls in the apart-

The biggest fear guys have in going to the apartments is not a raid but loosing their wallets. In a good place, it won't happen, because they want to keep you coming back. What I'm afraid of is two guys coming in the place, beating everybody up, and stealing the money. There's nothing I or the women could do to protect ourselves in that situation.

The Oriental Health Spas that advertise in Screw—I've been going to them more than the apartments lately. The rating a spa gets in that "Naked City" column in Screw has nothing to do with whether or not the place is any good.

Alot of spas are in the west 20s. There's even a few in Queens now. They can be over a warehouse, a store, always on the second floor. There's a buzzer at the door so they can see you before they let you in. I've never seen blacks go in because I don't think they want their trade. I have seen other businessmen, hardhats, Orientals, even some Puerto Rican guys.

A common name used in spas is Sandy, so if they ask you who you're loking for, say "Sandy." The \$30 you pay at the door is for the sauna and bath. Don't let the mamasan pick out a girl for you. Gently insisting on it without being nasty before you hand over the \$30 is the way to handle this.

There's usually three or four girls in the reception room. I like Oriental women with kind of a western shape—round asses and nice legs. Because I go to alot of different places, I'm surprised to see a girl stay for more than six months. I've seen only one Chinese and one Japanese girl in all the times I've been to spas—they're all Koreans. Not all the spas have attractive women.

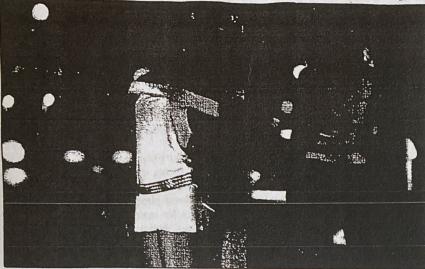
The girl you've picked will take you to a sauna or steambath. Me, I always pick the sauna because the steambath is too much—it's like I'm going to have a heart attack. "Have you ever been here before?" Tell her "yes" so she knows you've got the yin and yang of it. "How long ago?" Say "three weeks." If she pats you on the ass on the way to the sauna, there's a good chance she goes around the world.

The actual sex act starts in the shower and moves to one of the rooms upstairs. It's a turn-on for me to have a woman wash my body. She'll give you a shower, sprinkle your body, wash you with soap or body shampoo. When she's drying you and gets around the shlong zone, make the move. If she acts shy and bashful about it, you're going to have a good time.

Most of the girls in the spas I've run across give really good blowjobs. One spread the head of my penis and touched the opening with the tip of her tongue—the sensation was incredible. I shot the heaviest load of my life. Blimey.

The way you dress has something to do with the price you'll get charged. If you're well dressed, have alot of jewelry, they'll charge you more. I always dress casually and, when the girl asks what I do, I say I work for the city or something like that. Usually, the tip for the girl is from \$80 to \$120. But I've run into girls who were rip-off artists, trying to jack up the fee to \$150 or \$200. You can't always tell by their looks and personality. One spa was really nice until they got a good rating from *Screw*. After that, the girls tried to clip you.

The worst experiences I've had have been with escort services. Like at this bachelor party I went to a few years ago. The guys were afraid to pick up whores on the street because they thought a nigger pimp would cut their dicks off. So I called up a girl service that seemed reasonably priced. The girls who showed were a mixed bag. Two were cute, farm girl types, and the other two looked like Italians from the city. I picked one of the latter. We went to a room. I gave her the money. She brought in a little bowl with water and washed my dick. "I'll be right back." More than a few minutes passed. "What kind of fun do you like!" I said "a blowjob." She



insisted on making me wear a bag and I had to give her \$35 to do it without. She told me she hated the taste of it. I fucked her, too, but it was a very bad fuck.

A couple of years ago, I worked in an office on 54th St. and 6th Ave. This is a good area with alot of expensive hotels. Sure enough, there were streetwalkers—goodlooking white women, although I see alot of light skinned blacks up there now. This scene is subdued.

The women don't hang around in front of the hotels, but walk around between 5th and 6th

streetwalker around there. We went up to that hooker hotel around the corner from the theater. It had a really long, narrow staircase leading up to the desk, which made me afraid of being robbed. The girl was a rip-off artist—she rushed me through a blowjob and made me wear a bag, you should've seen her face when I told her "you really must hate what you do." It ran me \$20 for the room and \$30 for the girl.

Alot of cheap streetwalkers work the Lower East Side. 3rd Ave. around 14th St. is a big spot for them. It's very bad now, unless you want these girls was \$45.

The rooms went up from \$15 to \$20. There were in the Hotel V—, a transient place near St. Marks Place. The first time I went there, it was run down, with the walls a horrible faded blue color. The stairs had a mirror so the guy in the office could see the reflection, something common to all hooker hotels. The rooms were moderately sized, with a bathroom, a bureau and a bed. Some were shabby, some weren't. Once a girl and I had to chase out a drunken nigger who accidently tried to get in our room.

14th St. and 3rd Ave. also had the last massage parlor to stay open in the city, although it recently closed. The real estate in that area is just too valuable now. Its address was its name. Like everything in Manhattan, it was up the stairs. There was a guy at the desk, a real sleazeball, who looked like the brother of the fat moron who handed out the place's cards on the street. The first time or two you went there you got frisked by him. There were four cubicles. The partitions didn't go all the way up to the roof. The doors were hollow, strictly for privacy—you could've punched a hole through them. The place was fairly clean, which was a surprise.

Women in their thirties worked there. There was always at least one black and one white one —I never saw any PRs. Two Ukranian sisters with red hair and big breasts, both attractive, were the ones I saw. They both said they were divorced, and one claimed to be putting her daughter through private school. I mostly went for blowjobs, although one I did fuck. I asked one to swallow it—I was willing to pay her extra —and she said "how would you like it if I spit it back into your mouth!"

There's alot of TVs in that area. I don't find them sexy, even though a friend of mine says that they can be "interesting." One time, I went into the bar that they all hang out in, for a drink. You look in their eyes and it looks weird—the Continued on page 66

"In one brothel I had a girl play secretary. I pinched her ass, things like that. It was great but it was expensive."

Aves. They don't dress like streetwalkers, either—alot of them wear long skirts, making them look almost like secretaries. They know you. They can spot you. Normally, if you pass a woman on the street, she'll only glance at you for a few seconds. Hookers stare right in your eyes. "Wanna date?" I like to reply with something like "how much do you want for sucking my cock?"

These women will take you to the Hotel W—, which isn't a luxury place, but is an established tourist spot. The guy at the desk takes the \$25 under the table—you sign a different register book. The room, which is quite nice, is always in a deserted part of the same floor. What I got was mostly blowjobs without a bag, for which I paid the girl \$40 or \$50. The women bring in that bowl of water and a towel beforehand—they always make sure you're clean.

There's still alot of streetwalkers around 8th Ave. and 44th St. The worst ones work in an adult theater around there. The place is big, shabby, brightly lit. You used to see blowjobs going on in the audience all the time. One time I went in there and this big, black, distorted THING—I say THING because it didn't look like a woman or a transvestite—sat next to me. "Hooonnneeyy, you wanna blowjob! It's \$5." "No thanks." Even if any goodlooking hookers worked in there, I wouldn't do anything with them—I couldn't have sex in a public place. I'd be too nervous.

Once I did try it with a light skinned black

some fat slob who's been on the same corner for a few decades or a pimply faced drug addict with a few teeth left. The neighborhood is also jumping with cops because of all the drug trade.

I knew two goodlooking girls who worked there last year and I've never seen them again. Both were white girls, young—one was no more than 18 and the other was 21—with no needle marks. I could do anything to them—get a blow-job, fuck, even do a little kinky stuff. Not counting the room, the most I ever spent with one of





(continued from page 23)

face doesn't look like a woman's. Lately, I've seen them try to pick people up on the street in that neighborhood. A friend of mine tells me that it's hard to tell the difference in a blowjob from a good TV or a woman.

Another place on the Lower East Side where there used to be alot of streetwalkers is on Forsyth St., near the park where the junkies buy dope. It's toned down somewhat now. Light skinned black women, some PRs. Most of the white women were skeevy. I generally went with PRs, once with a white chick who was from West Virginia or someplace like that.

Normally, they went in cars or trucks. There was a hooker hotel, another transient place, which was the pits. Ugly greenish/blue color paint. The guy at the desk would buzz us in after the girl would yell something like "Frankie, this is Betty, buzz me in." She'd sign the register and the room was \$10, then \$15 a year later. It had really small rooms with no bathroom, a sink which looked like a basin held up by a stick. The bed was like a cot in an army barracks, which seemed to have been there since the place opened sixty years ago. A rinky dink bureau rounded out the furniture. The cheapest bj I got was \$15, but it was usually \$20 or \$25.

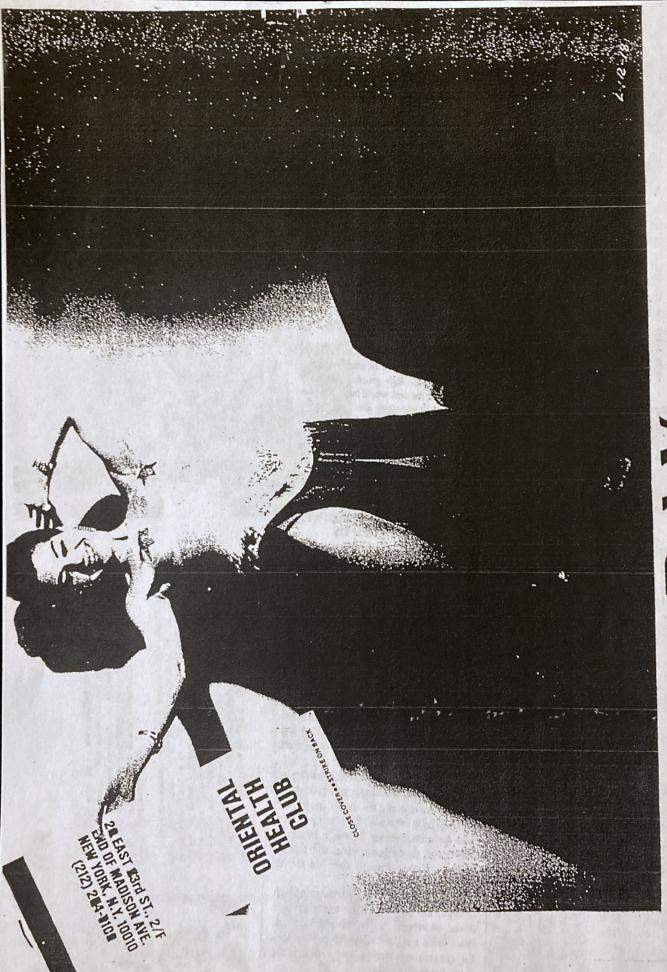
Whether she works on the street or in an apartment, a hooker will say something endearing to you if she likes you. "You've got a nice body," which is a lie because I'm overweight. "You're cute"-I'm not because my hair's thinned out. It's just the gesture of saying something nice, they don't really mean it. A hooker can sense if she's gonna lose you as a customer. She may rap about her kid. One woman claimed to be a nurse. Sometimes, they don't want to talk about themselves at all.

I can't say I've run across too many hookers who seemed intelligent. I think alot of them got married after they graduated high school and then got divorced-I've met alot of hookers who were divorced.

0

I believe that if they're good at what they're doing, they must like fucking and sucking for money on some level. Don't you think it must turn them on in some way? But I can't put them down for making money. To me, a hooker is more honest than a porno starlet who leeches off one old man, obviously after him for his

I've had some of my best experiences in South America. You can sit down and talk to the girls in the whorehouse before you pick one out. What you'd spend on a blowjob in New York City can get you an entire evening with someone there. But that's another story...



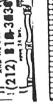
FRIDAY

THE SENSUOUS JOHN

by Landis

門門







-COCK RATING

aits at his feet. The sound is off and the picture turns over and over. The room is dark and filled with the ancient worn Friday sits in an overstuffed chair. A large color IV furniture common to a million Jersey brownstones. Old picrelatives in ornate frames and functionless knick knacks lurk everywhere. tures of

Friday snores loudly, his head slowly bobbing up and down, mouth open. A barely lit pipe sits in his open hand. Beneath the hand is an open copy of <u>Screw</u> that covers his lap. Friday is neither young nor old, just a bit dusty, possessing as he does that look of... a time gone by. With the thinning hair, the muttonchop sideburns and waxen moustache Friday films, line the pages of Police Gazette, dot the wallpaper at in black sox and derbies that fill the screen in silent stagbelongs to a long line of forefathers--the Chaplinesque men Nathan's Hotdogs.

conscious state. His eyes focus on the Spanish youths walking down the atreet. They stop under a streetlight and approach a uheezing and collapses on the hood. He can har laughter in the shadovs and the smell of pies hangs in the air. "Fucking Ricans... They run like the devil." into the night, grabbing an umbrella to defend himself. "Hy AUTO! That's my AUTO! You street scum! You hooligans! How dare you!" The kids are shocked to see this Rip Van Winkle man running at them like a ghost out of the night. They day's face as he watches the kids work over the car, for this is precisely the reason he has situated his chair in front of the window—so he can keep an eye on his car. His CARI Some SPIC is pissing on his CARI Now fully awake, Friday bolts arked car. One kid tries the hood, another pisses in the street near the rear tire. A slight smile creeps over Fri-The grandfather clock bongs, rousing Friday to a half split, flipping Friday the bird. Friday reaches the car parked car.

Mother's Milk

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15.53 (212)

.. time bandits.

chasing the thugs, rendering them unconscious with his umbrel-in and stealing their foodstamps. But this will never be. Oh the house. After all, THEY ran from HIM--the coverds. He HA. He collapses back in the chair. He returns to his copy of Screw. It's the ads in this porno tabloid that fascinate him -the thousands of ads for hookers in the back. He has called them all and been to many, He is just a man in search of "an honest lay," He is Friday... the Sensuous John. Friday feels rather macho enough as he heads back to Dusting himself off, Friday momentarily sees himself

"Sex is the most important thing in my life." Let's cut the crap, Friday likes big women, not fat, "a little on the chunky side." Irish types, Puerto Ricans, or "nigger blacks." Likes big tits, but is more of an ass and leg man. "Look but don't touch" fetishes about lingerie, garters and high heels. First question to any ad in Screw he's dialed: "Do you do CREER?"

84 WB Pregnant Mothers Interviewed

212) 15-3 2 white of Come explore the erotic joys body worship, 80880 dominance, epankinge & golden of light

Hearing Friday describing this reminded us of the time Speaking One recalls the most intense organs of his life. Two girls. One sucking. The other rimming. "I shot the heaviest load of my "I saw boats as Friday concluded his tale of ecstacy with a mober economic girls is they lick you all over from head to toe. Rim Jobs--... Little boats... You know, like that movie... What was it called? Time Bandits." But the euphoric head was shattered of which, Friday claims to have quite a big shlong, although ria jobs -- you have to pay extra for that, you know, but it's when inquiring about Greek. The great thing about Oriental worth it. Doesn't it excite YOU to have your ass LICKED?" Oriental Health Spas. To quote <u>Screy</u>, "they show a diadain for the ugly American and a preference for Oriental businessmen," yet Friday's got the yin and yang of it. We suspect it's the size of the wallet, not the shiong. Speak he sagely advises "always say you have a normal size penis "I had to PAY for this, you know. It cost MONEY." "they show a he discussed his only experience smoking optum. note.

Friday's needs. In the dismond district, 47th St. between 5th and 6th Aves. "There was a very nice South American woman, about 37, who I went to see several times." No graphic des-Just like male hustlers have with certain johns. Friday had odd emotional attachment to some of the women he visited. A touch of the Friday humor would visit the parlor, it being in close proximity to where Only one seemed to suit was supplied as he did impressions of the hassidic Jews who cription, a sentimental recollection. Massage parlors. Now defunct.

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vants to fuck. On the all black "topless shoeshine" spot on 42nd St.-"I could sense trouble. I... I... left fumediately." On a recent expedition to Times Square, Friday pontificated at length about racial issues. At first rather dignified and controlled-"why. I feel like an English explorer entering darkest Africa"-later, in the safe confines of a lith St. apartment, it became far more grocesque and uncontrolled. "RUFUS. Rufus is not a MAN. He lacks a strong father figure. It confuses him about sex. Therefore, the black man is incpt at sex. It's probably very quick. HE doesn't know hiw to PLESE a voman. And the stuff they say about BIC DICKS are rumors spread by RUFUS himself... What I'd like to do with Rassas is shoot them. Of CONYSE pot won't affect you if you have a brain the size of a peanut."

Drugs. Aside from a few hippie era run ins with LSD, fitday's drug experience--'yeah, I freebased in '69"--seemed more mythical than his abstracted ideas of women. He smokes grass in those mments of wild abandon, always sending someone else to get it and never indulging in his Jersey residence.

Puerto Ricans. "They'd fuck anything. Why, I saw them rape a white boy once. The kid was cuce, with bangs. They dragged him in an alley." Just as Friday had a "yousah" impression for Rufus, there was a "nedea medea" for "craxy Julio." (Ironically, Friday works in a bank full of Chinamen. Perhaps this is God's way of raining on the Friday parade). Witnessing one of Friday's whitefaced minstrel shows could stop the uninitiated dead in their tracks.

Take the case of the Dustman. A nickel cokes and Valiums flend who worked at SCTEW. When Friday found out his employer, the initial conversation was businesslike inquiries. "They must make alot of money at that place." Five minutes later, an endiess barrage of questions about the hooker ads. "So, what do the girls look like who drop them off? Know any? Gotten any... FREBIES?" Dustman was painfully polite but under his breath muttered "get him OUT of here."

Homosexuala. A bit of the Friday schizophrenia on the lavender lifestyle. Sometimes it's impressions of "the African Queen." Friday and the African Queen were both bartenders at the now history Terminal Bar opposite the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Friday proudly recalls how he pissed in this unfortunate faggot's drink. His favorite quote from the African Queen: "He's always comparing me to his wife but I do things a voman can't." But then the liberal flip of the Friday coin. "Everyone has a right to do what they want to in the privacy of their own home."

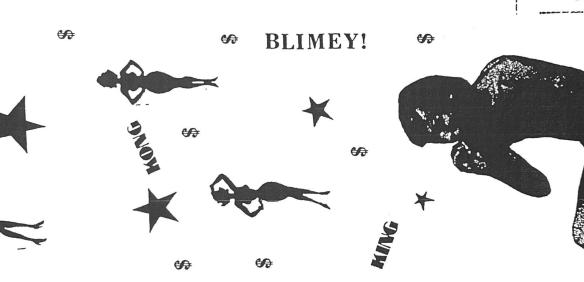
Even odder was how he relished talking about chickenhawks. "You could never tell by looking at him. He looked like a normal, masculine gay. But then he and his wife would go to 8th St., near that midnight movie theater. They'd pick up 12 year old boys. Hake them wear lipstick and garters. Fuck 'em, too. Whatever gets you through the night, I guess." Blimey.

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DIOOODY REMEMBER
THE DAY AS.....

A HERB BROMBERG PRESENTATION

A QUIET,
UNHURRIED,
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Sulka of Friday's 1d popped out. Perhaps the most Fridayesque " At first oblique references and shoved it up the queen's ass. I knew it was a guy because tale here concerned a four way between a drag queen, a Puerto "The Puerto Rican took a fistful of Vaseline I saw the outline of the cock through the panties. The queen sat on his cock, which was tremendous, taking it all in." to the amount of U'Learys at La Bamba at 2 AM, but then the Rican Buy and Birl, and our man Friday himself. Naturally, When pressed as to the idently of Friday's allegedly ichale friday was fucking the girl but his mind seemed to be on I--I don't know ... how ... I saw the outline of the cock through the pantles. how can you tell with just a blow job." related as "a friend of mine ... maybe it was a transvistite... something else.

the closet door would open. The telltale giveavay: stories

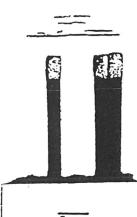
Pee pee. Humber one. Friday digs it. "It's just varm liquid, you know. Nothing... threatening." Friday's not a Fratam, not yet at least. Not to mention the prep school Friday, who gleefully recounted a tale of urine soaked revenge. A fellow classmate ripped Friday and chums off, so he and his buddies all took turns whizzing on him as the Beach Boys' IN MY ROOM waffed through the speakers. Double blimey.

What's next for Friday? As Confucius say, in land of John all roads lead to wallet. Like Napoleon's defeat... the fall of Rome... Custer's last stand... we know the final Friday day fixation. Something's happening. Hr. Friday doesn't know what it is. Friday on the pooltable at La Bamba, dressed to the max in garters and high heels, getting balled by a black sanitation worker. "Friday maelf at a Junior High in Jersey City." I don't know... maybe it was me, Officer O'Leary." Friday-King Kock--jerking off from the top of the Empire State Building. "BLIHEY, HEAVY LOAD COMING!"

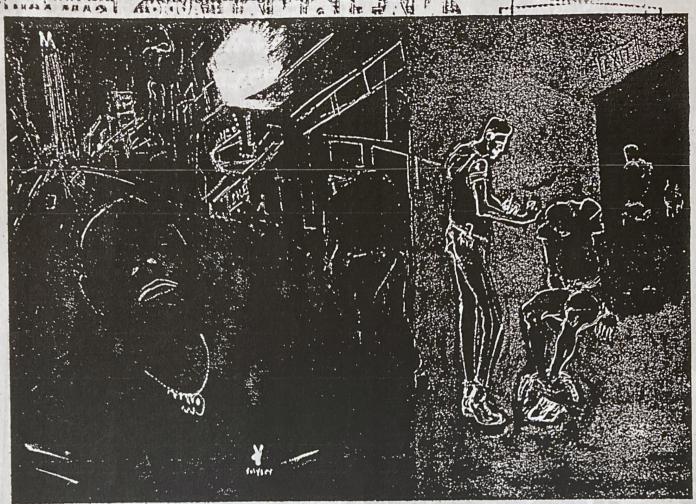
Friday sits in the half light of late afternoon. All this tailing has exhausted him. He looks old beyond years. "I don't know. I haven't had much luck with women." He picks up a <u>Screw</u>, an old copy, at least four years. He turns to the hooker ads in the back. Like a junkle doing repeated cotton shots even though nothing is left, he calls numbers that no longer exist. Absently he listens to the disconnect recording, savoring some sort of trace amount. The hours grow late. He has called every number in <u>Screw</u>. The inevitable depression sets in. Yet there is sone more number he must call... a number of a man... a man who owes him a great deal of money.

Uptown, a wasted man in crumpled clothes reads <u>Variety</u> and drunkenly sings along to acratchy records of old shoutunes. His name is Joel. The phone rings. Joel looks at it a long time before picking it up. "Hal-hello... Oh, it's you, Friday."

To he continued



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Using and Losing on Times Square

Hustling the Deuce

Joey

oey looks like an archetypal white junkie. Scraggly blond hair under a baseball cap; a gaunt, mustached face; long sleeves in any weather; dirty, baggy dungarees dropping off his nonexistent ass. His hands and feet are all puffy-the veins in them have been used

up long ago.
"I grew up in Manhattan. Uptown. I've been hanging out on 42nd Street since I was 17, hustling since I was 20, 21. Fifty-third and Third, too. There was more money around years ago. My father was a transit cop. I never really knew my mothtransit cop. I never really knew my mother—she left when I was very young. My dad's retired now. He's got a dick like John Holmes, a dick that any homosexual would love to suck. I always used to say to him, 'Dad, did you find me on a park bench or somethin'?' because I'm set like particulathy wall hung. I think park bench or somethin? because I'm not, like, particularly well hung. I think he knew I hustled. I'd like to settle down—I'm 32 now—before he dies, give him peace of mind. I love him very much. "I've been gettin' high for the last 15 years. Drugs were much better then. Cheaper, too. I was clean for four months agailer this year. I was in fail for beceting

earlier this year. I was in jail for boosting. I do one, two bags a day even though I could handle about five. I can cop anywhere—East Harlem Ninth Avenue.

Harlem Harlem, Lower East Side, South Bronz. I mostly go to East Harlem. It's still \$10 uptown for a bag of dope. I can't see spending \$15 on Ninth. I like doing coke, but when I do it, I can't control myself. People like Manny—they chase after that coke all day. That turns me off."

Joey is the sort of guy who will walk 20 blocks to cop the best dope he can find and then walk another 10 blocks to look and then walk another 10 blocks to look for a gallery. He has no qualms about using other people's works. AIDS? "You get it, you're dead. That's it. But I don't think I'll get it. "I used to hustle a lot at Blackjack. Blackjack changed. There's other peep places I can work out of, where I know the people even though they have those

the people, even though they have those signs up. There's not too much money for me at Eddie's, even though I have a few regulars. I got one guy, he makes me jerk off in the back of his car. This other one, he pays me \$10 for each Spanish boy I bring him. I'd like to pawn this jecket so I can get a bag of dope, but I gotta see the john that bought it for me."

Joep is generally around the Deuce, although he doesn't make as much money husting as he used to. Sometimes he's walking with an old queen, sometimes he's giving that "cocaine cocaine" rap. "What you do, you put a bit of real coke on top of stuff you get at a head show on top of stuff you get at a head shop.
The person tastes it and thinks it's real.

Just beat out-of-towners, Jersey or Long Island people, people who are here just for the weekend. I don't want to be look-

ing over my shoulder all night."

He's what some people would call a criminal type, and what appeal he has as a hustler is probably that of low-risk rough trade. Boosting, possession, attempted male prostitution, hopping the train (the street term for fare-beating)-Joey has been arrested over 50 times. "But I've never been in a fight all the time I've been on the Deuce. Niggers would try to start with me and I'd just yell louder than them—'YOU THINK I'M A PUNK? HUH?" Guys on the Deuce, they're all mouth, all mouth. I got better, they re all mouth, all mouth. I got straight yesterday by boosting address books from Lamston's. They were worth \$3 each and I sold 'em for a dollar apiece. One of them fell out of my jacket as I was leaving and I almost got caught. I sell Tylenol I steal from Red Apple to that drugstore over there.

"When I've been really sick I've picked few pockets, taken johns off. I've seen hustlers who say they don't suck cock suck somebody off. Maybe the guy was sick—I wouldn't say anything about it. I wouldn't do it. Never sucked anybody off, never got fucked in the ass. But if somebody said, 'Here's \$500, lemme fuck you up the ass,' I'd say, 'Here it is.'"

Continued on next page

de for a few dollars more. Joey needs money so badly that he'll do anything for \$10.

"I'm on welfare. I get a rent check. I get \$50 worth of food stamps and cash em in for \$35." He had a room in East

all-night theaters if a cashier be knows lets him in free. He constantly bums cigarettes or change for food.

"I like to fuck girls. TVs, transsexuals, too. They chase after me like crazy. Even though they have dicks, I'll fuck 'em. Evfucks a pig-wild. In another, this girl is supposed to eat shit but the shit looked fake. I dig big tits. I was in a couple of loops, magazines. I was the submissive. It

wasn't much money—\$50 a day—but it was \$50 that I could get high with.

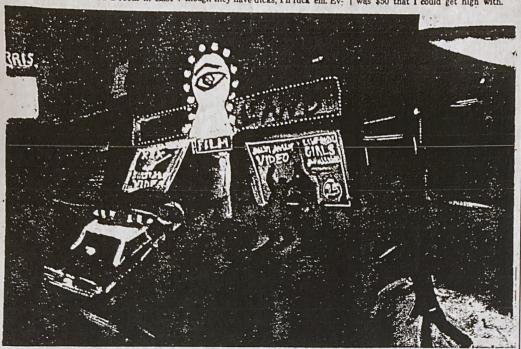
a nursing home—bringing the old folks their food. Made eight dollars and change an hour. I had my girlfriend working the streets out here for me. She pulled \$1000 a week. A john was writing checks for me like crazy. I had an apartment, a stereo, a color TV. But then I lost my job due to excessive absences—I was getting high so much I wouldn't leave the house for days. My girlfriend got too greedy with the dope and left me. I collected unemploy-ment for six months...and now, this."

It's gotten so tough for Joey to earn his daily get-straight cash that he went on Methadone. "I can't take it anymore. The program I'm on is only \$7 a week. They started me at 40 milligrams, raised me to 50 even though I would have been comfortable at 30. The idea is to keep you on it. It'll take years for my hands to heal. No more sticking needles in myself. Every Saturday I get a take-home. I can sell it and buy a few racks." Soon Joey is spending every cent he makes each day on cracks. They have replaced dope as his get-high.

Cracks

imes Square has always been a freebasing haven. Area folks who "can't deal with tracks, better off piping it" include porn movie performers, live sex show couples, and strippers. The catch to freebasing is that you're never satisfied. People will spend their last dollar attempting to recapture that first rush, running their expenditures into the thousands.

In order to freebase, you'd have to start In order to freebase, you'd have to start with a 50 (\$50 worth, approximately half a gram) of coke, know how to cook it up into a rock with baking soda, get a large glass pipe (at least \$7), and, frequently, buy a torch. Therefore, less well-off Times Square denizens would have to this is with ather to cook in the start of the s chip in with others. Cracks, just invented



rojection, lifting prints, painting the theater. They pay me \$20, \$25 a day. But don't ever mention me there or that you seen me. After they fire me for stealing, I hang around.

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Cracks are sold all over 42nd Street and in Bryant Park. The park salesmen are a more hyper version of the black kids who just sell sense (homegrown sinsemilla): "Crack it up, crack it up." For such a new phenomenon, crack is ominously popular. Its terminal results are already visible on many users.

Jorge

t the Narcissus Theater, the talent scout tries to avoid hiring dancers who are "cokies. The minute a dancer looks stoned, likehe's going to fall off the stage or some-thing, we let them go." Jorge is typical of Narcissus dancers—guys who strip before

working the audience for tricks. He's a young Latino guy with more than a slight touch of effeminacy-a "cha-cha queen. Jorge's get-high habits have never been detected by the Narcissus management because, like a lot of drug users, he doesn't give a fuck about coke. "With coke, I get paranoid. Me and my lover, we got into freebasing for a while—it really runs into a lot of money. "That's why I do dope. It's a mellow high that lasts a long time, like eight

hours. It's cheaper-you can do it once and stay high, you don't have to keep doing it like coke. With this sort of high, I can stay sociable. Unless you're into it, too, you wouldn't know I was high.
"I go down here—Ninth Avenue. Nev-

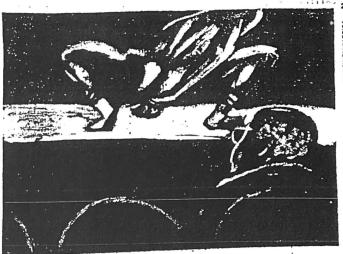
er been to 118th Street or to the Lower East Side. I live right around the corner. The brands of dope that really affect me are Blue Moon and Paradise. There's two people I know who sell Blue Moon. I've never used anyone else's works in my life. I always get a new set if I can because I don't want to get tracks. I do it two, maybe three times a week—I don't want to get stuck with a habit."

Ninth Avenue

inth Avenue from the mid-40s to the low 50s has always been a dope spot. Years ago, there were peculiarly priced bags like the \$21 Heart or the \$22 Mercedes. Now, small groups of dealers purchase bundles (10 bags of dope) on the Lower East Side or in East Harlem and sell a dime bag for \$15. The \$5 extra is supposedly the cabfare you would've spent on a trip out of the neighborhood. Sometimes you can cop short—say, four bags for \$57.

Transactions on Ninth Avenue take place largely between buyers and sellers

who know each other and proceed to take a little stroll. The amount of legitimate business traffic makes it even harder for Officer O'Leary to detect what's going on.



ancers at these places often earn \$5 a dance, so the idea is to get tricks in the audience.

If you don't see a dealer you know, one of the regular runners will lead you to some-one who's selling for a tip or a taste. The corner of 48th Street and Ninth Avenue remains a magnet for all manner of flot-sam and beat artists. There are a few shooting galleries left.

Diabetic works are sold on Ninth Avenue for \$2 to \$3 each. These have a short, undetachable point, unlike the blue-tip works sold elsewhere. Since they are ofworks soid eisewhere. Since they are of-ten sold unsealed, with just a removable plastic cap, some people will try to get rid of "half new" works—ones which have been used once or twice (moisture inside the barrel or blood marks near the point are a tipoff). Also available are 20s of coke, which are more like \$15 worth on

the Lower East Side. Everything's more expensive midtown. Ninth Avenue and 51st Street remains a big spot for cocaine and Dilaudid (a synthetic opiate), but is under closer police scrutiny as of late.
Ninth Avenue is known for weird cuts

in the drugs. Some buyers felt Heart was all sleeping powder, crushed downers that dissolve in water. Others feel that dealers tap the bags, replacing the dope they've stolen with a little sleeping pow-der "for that heavy nod effect." There was also the recently defunct Smiling Faces \$7 bags of "cocaine." Joey claims, 'It was all speed. People would say they were buying coke, but when they ran there every day because their bones hurt Continued on next page

396 Avenue Of The Americas Thursday, April 10, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Rita Mae Brown, bestselling author of Rub/rait Jungle.

Southern Discomfort, Six of One, and Sudden Death, will be at

B. Dalton to autograph her newest book, High Hearts.

High Hearts is the story of a young Southern bride whose
honeymoon is cut short when the Civil War begins. She cuts her hair,
dons a uniform, changes her name to Jimmy, then enlists in the Confederate Cavalry to be with her beloved. She soon discovers her liair for battle, while her husband's introspective, philosophical nature makes it repugnant to him. It all adds up to an intriguing tale of love and mistaken identity as the horrors of war reshape the lives of family and friends in the South.

High Hearts is on sale at B. Dalton for \$16:16 through April

19. Have the author sign a copy for you.

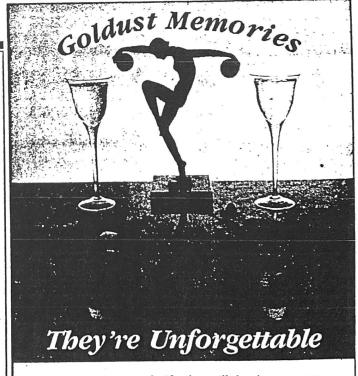
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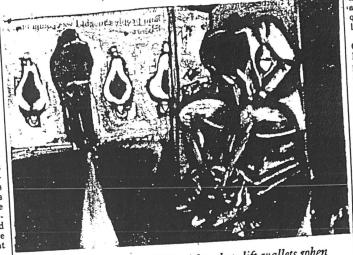
and their noses were running, they were going to get a speed fix. When they closed, a lotta people got sick."

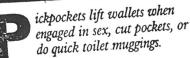
Runners and dealers in midtown are an odd bunch of Latinos who shoot and snort their own products. After a few trips there, you see the same faces over and over: the Brothers, the Cuban and his Wife, the Midget Lady, the Dirty One, the Old Man.

The Old Man has been an area fixture for the past 15 years. Arms covered with tattoos and tracks, he walks with a pronounced limp. "I got this way from a car accident. I'm a crazy driver." Always has new, usually sealed works and is the arnew, usuany seased works and is the area's most trustworthy runner. About his
clientele, he feels that "a lot of the guys
that come here to buy—they get the
money because they trick with the faggots." When asked if he had ever turned tricks when he was a young man, there was a long silence, followed by a hesitant "no."

Johns

ow to describe a typical Times Square homosexual john? Baldhead, notorious director of "chicken classics" gay hard-core movies, puts it best. "Gay and straight johns are the closest looking people in both sexual tendencies. That coat, that business suit, their whole attitude is not queeny-you never see a queen paying for boys, they're too pretty to do that. It takes having a realistic view of yourself. He knows what realistic view of yourself. He knows what he is, he likes to suck a big dick and is willing to pay \$30 for it. The sort of guy that could pass in a supermarket for a cashier, usually. Dressed straight to the point you can tell they've worn those clothes for 20, 30 years. It's not something they put on yesterday. The hair may be slicked back a little, nicely barbered with kind of a cheap smell from the bered with kind of a cheap smell from the cologne. That Death in Venice look with the hair painted on. A lot of them are





professionals. Some Eighth Avenue johns-ones that wear suits but don't have jobs, just little scams—are as bad as the hustlers. Johns that get high with the hustlers-both of them are losers, basically, trying to find out how to communicate. When the dick is in the mouth, they want to have something just a little extra in common. You can find a john that is smart enough to leech off the hustler. Former hustlers, something like that. Some of the johns, when they think they are dressed up, they think they are elegant, wear a red blazer that's a little short, a golden emblem on its breast, and a matching handkerchief. The hustlers that go with all these types of johns all suck dick-it's like a vacuum cleaner, that mechanical."

Hustlers primarily work out of two bars: Eddie's and La Tropicana. At Ed-die's you find some ethnics and a lot of white, tough, no longer kids. Baldhead describes Eddie's hustlers as "extremes very loud, criminally oriented. The worst white trash I've ever seen." The place is white trash I've ever seen." The place is big and flashy, on a street frequented by strippers, theatergoers, and junkies on their way to cop. La Tropicana is small and darkly lit, with mostly black and Puerto Rican hustlers. A lot of minority drag queens hang out here. Girlfriends of Eddie's hustlers tend to fall in that not-quite-hooker. not-quite-fag-hag realm. quite-hooker, not-quite-fag-hag realm. For various reasons, they're not into guys from regular heterosexual society. It turns them on to know a guy sells his body. Some mention must be made of the

now defunct Haymarket on 47th Street and Eighth Avenue: Drugs, minors, drag queens, runaways—all behind an Xmaslights front with pseudo-saloon doors.

Male "strippers" work theaters like the Crown Jewel, Narcissus, and now defunct Follies and Gaiety. Since dancers at these places earn ridiculously low wages, often \$5 a dance, the idea is to get tricks in the adance, the sidea is to get tricks in the audience, quickies in the theater or planned renderyous for later if on-premises hustling is forbidden. Tourists frequent these places.
Possibly because they're married,

many johns are paranoid about diseases and will participate in "safe sex" with the hustler. This fear preceded the AIDS panic. Mutual masturbation, often nonorgasmic, occurs in theater stairwells or hotel rooms. This is such an easy trick, and so many guys are willing to turn it, it's only worth \$10 or \$20. Some johns don't care and get involved in anal and oreless. oral sex. Only occasionally will you hear a hustler claim he uses condoms for anal

Then there are the big scores that hustlers hope for amid the \$10 tricks. Times Square has always had its freaks and fetishists, people who can only get off sexually in a tenderloin district. Like the weirdo who came into the Ecco Theater werdo who came into the Ecco Theater drunk at 4 a.m., sweating, sniffing poppers. "Tell me I'm garbage, tell me I'm shit." Besides being talked dirty to, this guy liked to have his cock and nipples pinched. He gave out \$100 hills.

"Sometimes weirdos would come to the Naviers!" Tesus Cary who used to dence

Narcissus," says Gary, who used to dance there. "There was this one guy, he had all four of us dancers piss on him and gave us \$100 each. And Lardass. Must weigh 350 pounds. Always wears these green stretch pants. Pays you \$40 to lick your

Footsie. Everybody on Eighth Avenue knows Footsie. A pepper-haired, worried-looking man, dressed unflatteringly in a running jacket, but always so he can be spotted. Makes the rounds of most of the









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Eighth Avenue theaters, straight and gay. A shrimp queen. Pays the grungiest minority guys \$20 to \$80 to suck their toes. Spends \$100 to \$200 a day doing this. There has been much speculation as to how Footsie makes his money—an area hotel owner and New York Times bigwig are but two of the rumors. The guys he goes with are always hanging around the theaters, waiting for him, asking for him.

are out two or the rumors. The guys he goes with are always hanging around the theaters, waiting for him, asking for him.

A typical example of a john who gets high with hustlers is JoJo. Says Joey."I used to hustle with JoJo on 53rd and Third years ago. You could tell he liked what he was doing. He was skinny then." Now he's a fat slug after any Puerto Rican boy with a big dick. Buys them a bag of dope, gets off with them, sucks their cock. "I've been hanging out on 42nd Street since I was 16," he says. He looks it.

Manny

'm a complete professional. I handle all sorts of scenes. I am a moneymaking muthafucka." Manny has been a fixture on the Deuce for the past four years. You can see him in front of the peep places any time of the day or night making his money.—"I never take less than \$20." A tall Puerto Rican, about 28, with a big Afro and a thin, biblical face, arms heavily tattooed, always clad in dirty blue running outfits. From his build, one would think he's hung like John Holmes, but his average-sized cock looks small on that body. Understandably, this is a sensitive matter with him.

matter with him.

Manny's a speedball junkie. He gets off three or four times a day, spending \$100 to \$150 by evening. "I buy the \$15 bags of dope down here, from the guy with the hairnet—he usually has Checkmate—or through the Old Man. By the time you go uptown, take a cab, spend \$3 for a gallery, it comes out to the same thing."

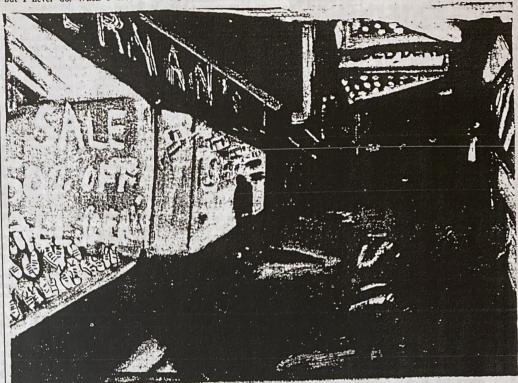
lery, it comes out to the same thing."
"Mostly, I chase after that coke. Shooting coke—it's the ultimate. I like that stuff from the building near the pizza

place—it's the best shit around here. I don't bother with nickels or dimes—too much cut. I've done extremely pure coke where I thought I was gonna black out, but I never do. When I used to lift

weights, I would shoot coke right before and people thought I was gonna bust my heart.

heart.
"Coke is a hallucinogenic drug. I'm gonna do this 20 in one shot. Then I'm

gonna start hallucinatin. He stares in the mirror, begins thinking that people are following him, becomes totally paranoid. Sometimes he uses coke to stay Continued on next page



o you know where I can find a room? I tried a few places around here, but they're outrageous, just outrageous. I'm staying with tricks, at the Port Authority, anyplace."

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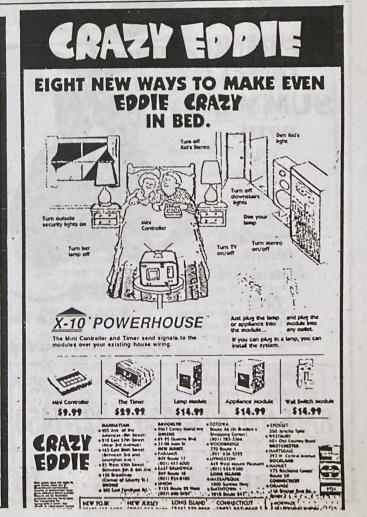
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awake for three days at a time so he can make money and spend it on more ilrugs. I "I don't wanna get no AIDS, so'l don't use anyone else's needles. I have a friend who takes insulin, so I get free diabetic sets." But the sets he uses always look well used and never properly cleaned. If he doesn't have one on him, it's "Can I use your works?"

Manny has that sort of charm, that glint in his eye that makes him instantly likable. But he does so many awful things that everyone who likes him eventually gets fed up with him. Not content with \$40 from Footsie, he hits him up for \$60 or \$80. Follows the poor old guy on the street and harasses him until he forks over more cash. Goes into a john's car with another hustler and then splits with both their fees. Takes people's money to go cop for them and never returns. Rips off johns. "He's one person I'd love to see get it," says a Narcissus employee.

Manny used to work a lot out of Black-

Manny used to work a lot out of Blackjack. Once the grungiest 42nd Street peep place, it's now a sparkling clean adult video store. "It's not like I'm not allowed in there, it's that there's nothing for me in there." His main hustle is having a "faggot" suck his dick in a peep booth." He had a girlfriend working the streets for him, but that ended when he beat her up. Though he claims to be "straight,"

preys on other, younger Hispanic

'He takes periodic breaks from the scene to recover. The last one was to be "moving to this nice house in Jersey" with a black drag queen. It never came through. He gave up speedballs for cracks and now spends all his money on them. "I didn't get dopesick at all. I was doing mostly coke." Manny now looks worse than when he was speedballing. His skin is jaundiced, his throat is swollen, his voice is hoarse.

Hanky.

here's not a man in here,"
says Hanky, surveying the
crowd at the Ecco Theater.
"All queens. No tricks, no
trade, nothing." The Ecco
shows old 16mm straight hard-core porn
for an audience predominantly made up
of black homosexuals and sleepers. Since
the place is open from 10 in the morning
to six the next morning, it's the cheapest
hotel on Eighth Ayenue.

Life is a Möbius strip of sex for cash and cash into drugs for hustlers, but most of them manage to travel beyond a fourblock radius. Hanky conducts all business within a stone's throw of the Ecco, which is, in effect, his residence. Each day is an endless cycle of tricks, cracks, theaters.

In this twenties, very and, with lighty black din, Hanky is a disconcerting black din, Hanky is a disconcerting blend of masculine and feminine traits. His Afro is worn somewhat like a woman's, his lips and eyes are also womanly, but his body is big and muscular. A queen, but never one to put on a dress. Always ready to respond to the insult "faggot" and never one to run from a fight. There's a lot of man under that

fight. There's a lot of man under that woman. "I'm more of a sadist than a masochist. I'm a Taurus.

"I've had sex with 15,000 people since I was 14. For \$10 or \$20 tricks around here, I'll give a quick blowjob. I like to get fucked. I always come prepared." A little leather bag he carries contains Vaseline, douche, Listerine, and a small basepipe. "With all these diseases going round, you never can be too clean." A lot of Hanky's tricks are straight-looking guys who like acting out a parody of heterosexual sex with an effeminate boy. "That old man over there—you'd never know it, but he's a trick. Worth \$20. Nice guy, too. One of my regulars should come by tonight."

On screen at the Ecco, a black guy and a white guy are forcing themselves on a 60-year-old woman. The movie is called The Big Man. "The Big Man—huh—the big nellie more like it. I've been in every theater around here except the gay ones.

Sheik on 42nd Street—it's open all night. They cleaned it up it little, put' video in, but they still didn't get all them drag queens out. Real ugly ones. They go in the theater dressed as men and go in the bathroom and change. The Pearl shows the new porno movies, but there's still a lot of drag queens there, too. One girl who works in there—she's worse than those drag queens. Charges faggot prices and 20 minutes later you still see her suckin' on that same dick for the same \$10\$. The Roxy shows good movies, like those 12 horror pictures. It's that video theater on 42nd Street that's open all night. They don't allow cruising but it's clean and they keep the pickpockets out.

"I love coke. When I'm not here, what I be doing is working for this coke house near where I'm from in Queens. Dope—I gotta be in the mood. I've done it but it gives you this awful mask that everybody always knows you've done it. When I was 17, my cousin did coke in a needle. He OD'd and died. I was in the house right with him and didn't know what to do. So I'll never use a needle—just through the nose and smoke them cracks. I got some stuff on 51st Street and Ninth Avenue that I really liked sniffing. The count wasn't great but it was really clean. When I base, I can't be bothered cooking up coke with baking soda and all that. I'm sure the cracks I get in Bryant Park and on 42nd Street are real—I always go to the same people. I'm not like other people with cracks—I can base and still go to sleep. I'm not addicted to them or anything." There are dark circles under Hanky's eyes from long nights smoking crack after crack. An hour later, he's off to 42nd Street to buy another one.

Pickpockets

group of people who work some of the same turf as hustlers and are involved in another kind of sex-for-money scam are pickpockets. Mostly black men who hang out at all-male theaters, they lift wallets when engaged in sex, cut the pockets of dozing customers, or do quick toilet mug-gings. Some pickpockets are violent and have been known to stab victims. Others, like Curtis, have their profession down to an art. A mark will cruise him, and in the blink of an eye his wallet's gone. Curtis says, "The business has picked up at the theaters on weekends since those places like the Mine Shaft and the Anvil have closed. You'll even see tourists with money going in dumpy ones like the Queen and the Samson. But these diseases they're gonna kill everything. In six months, you won't see these theaters anymore. I don't want to get AIDS. That's why when I get high I don't use needles-I freebase. And not these garbage cracks down here, either."

Junior

unior is a pest but a charming one. He works at different Times Square establishments, gets fired, charms his way back. He's a muscular Latino guy, 32, with hook nose and silly grin. He's spent the time he was in stir for "sticking up a cab, hoppin' the train, things like that." He usually wears worn imitation designer jeans and one of those "New York" sweatshirts. Junior is kind of goofy-looking but is considered by many area folks to be what one guy called "a nice piece of Puerto Rican trade."

Puerto Rican trade."

He used to work at the Narcissus and Ecco Theaters. "Projection, lifting prints, painting the theater. They pay me \$20, \$25 a day. But don't ever mention me there or that you seen me. After they fire me for stealing, I hang around. It was Christmas Eve. I was broke. I wanted to get my daughters a present. There was this fat South American guy in the box office. I tell him I'm broke. He say, 'Here, Junior, take the money.' I tell him to give me the pay envelopes, too." (Exactly how this occurred has never been clear to anybody, including the police.) "I go to Ninth Avenue and get me. a 50 of coke..."



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Continued from page 27 * somebody off? I can't hit myself." His works look well used, like the barrel of one has been attached to the point of another. "You should see some of the" works I use. I get 'em off other guys at Eddie Forget shout booting it, just do it in one quick shot." The pleasurable rush is over. Gary leaves the theater,

He wasn't around for about a month. One day, he was on the corner opposite the Narcissus, where the pizza place is. "I went home for a while. Got hepatitis from dirty needles. I can't use narcotics until I'm better. Hey man, I got these diabetic sets. Nobody's used them. They're new. I'll sell 'em for \$3 each—that's what they sell 'em for on Ninth Avenue, isn't it?"
He has two customers, an Eddie's hustler and his girlfriend. They turn the corner.

"Hey man, you're working the night shift at this theater, the Ecco, now. Tried gettin' Denny to hire me again next door, but forget it. I'm all better. Saw a doctor. No more hepatitis. I got sick of Denny suckin' my cock, anyway. He tricks with

all the dancers and gives you nuthin.
"I made \$40 today. Two tricks. One
was at the Sheraton with this guy I met
at Eddie's. The other was in that peep place over on Seventh Avenue. Easy ones. I'm stayin' with a trick over on 47th Street. One thing I don't like to do is fuck

people up the ass. I mean, I've done it for money, but I'm not into it.
"I'm gonna get somethin' from that building over by the pizza place. I go there every night. They have the best shit around here—20s in machine-sealed hers." A dime of toke is usually anough bags." A dime of coke is usually enough for one good shot. "Yeah, you can do two for one good shot. Yeah, you can do two good shots from it, or do a whole 20 for one excellent shot. It all breaks down—there's no cut left over. The place was hot as hell for a while. They were closed. Somebody overdosed and died in there. "I bought works today from the OM.

"I bought works today from the Old Man. You told me about him. One shoe is bigger than the other. He sells 'em for \$2. I only use my own works now—don't wanna get AIDS or anything." Gary pulls a well-used set out of his sock, one that hasn't been cleaned out. "I learned how to his myself." His came have long track to hit myself." His arms have long tracks, all with reddish coke burns. "The only thing wrong is this swelling in my legs,

cent lemon creme cookies. "I gotta make some money. Only got \$2 on me. Last night, I did a 25 from 50th Street. I wanted to rush but didn't. It just felt like I did

a lot of coke. Very disappointed."

He yells at a girl on the street. She ignores him. He yells at another. Though Gary claims to "have a girlfriend," he's never around any women. He says hi to two ancient johns.

"Hey, remember those nickels you told me about on the Lower East Side? I went down with this other guy to Tiger near Houston Street. I felt half a nickel. They look more like dimes." He walks into Eddie's "This is my spot, right here. I never buy a drink here—just stand around and wait for some sucker to buy one for me. Well, this is where I work See ya."

Big Tom Buck

oney is like manure—if you don't spread it around it's not worth anything, it's just a pile of shit

It seems like you run into him every time you turn a corner in midtown.
Westing that "Jack Wrangler Live" Tshirt, a glazed look on his face as he digs through the garbage for returnable cans. From one garbage can to the next he goes, his eyes glassy from narcotics.
His name is Big Tom Buck. Tom used

to be a movie star in Baldhead's gay movies, movies which still have a big following today. Now he works a \$15-a-day shift at the porno theater where he lives, spending all his free time in search of bottle money. It used to be coke, then it was dope. Now people say it's the cracks. He never has a dime in his pocket. He's 40 years old.

40 years old.

Tom was a nice guy—still is—but something seems wrong. Now he's like a blank spot. Nobody wants to trick with Tom 'cause he looks too sickly. So Tom gets the cans and whenever Tom has enough cans he gets high. And that's all Tom ever does. Money is like manure, If you don't spread it around it's not worth anything. Hustling. anything. Hustling.

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DOCCOCOCO By BILL LANDIS OCCOCOCOCO

"It was afternoon, I was waiting for a bus and had a few hours to kill. So I figured, why not see some smut? There was a theater near the Port Authority showing porno. When I entered, I was shocked. The place was big, shabby, brightly lit, All kinds of characters were in the audience — dirty old men, Asians, derelicts both asleep and awake.

"Hookers of either sex would loudly approach you whether you looked interested or not. Many of the 'female' ones were actually transvestites. Down the row from me, two men were having sex — and this place showed straight movies! God knows what was going on in the balcony. The odor of the toilets was noticeable throughout. I left immediately."

That aptly typifies the not undeserved reputation some porno theaters have in New York City. Partially because people like the reluctant X-rated fan quoted "are afraid to go in those places" coupled with a host of other factors, business has fallen off. An industry source says that "it was typical to get 400 customers a day for the first week of a new picture. Now, theaters are lucky if they make half that in admissions."

26 In Manhattan

There are currently 26 adult theaters operating in Manhaftan. All show hardcore, except for the Canal Cinema, which presents Japanese imports for a Chinatown crowd. Within a block of the intersection of 14th Street and 3rd Avenue are the hetero Varieties Photoplays, Metropolitan and Cinema 14, as well as the all-male Bijou. Moving up the East Side to 61st Street and 1st Avenue is the firstrun, straight Eastworld.

The only remaining adult theater in the West Village is the gay West-world on the dockstrip. Most of the houses are concentrated around. Times Square: Theaters showing firstrun straight features are the Pussycat Grand, Kittykat, World, Circus and Anco. Double and triple bills of the older hetero XXX fare are at the Big Apple Twin, Cameo, Capri, Frisco, Harem, Orleans, Venus And Victory,

Times Square all-male houses are the Adonis, Eros, Kings and Show Palace. Slightly above the Times Square area are two more gay theaters: the 55th Street Playhouse and the New David. Theaters vary in size from 80-seat shoeboxes to large grindhouses with balconies. Admissions ranges from \$1.99 for a triple bill to \$6.50 for a firstrun feature.

VCR, UDC, & AIDS

Homevideo, the threat of Times Square, redevelopment, and the AIDS epidemic all have affected the theaters adversely. Some have bit the dust. Among all-male houses, the Gaiety, which featured a male strip show between pics, has been padlocked by the IRS.

PM Prods, ran three gay spots within a block of 48th Street and Broadway — the Big Top and Tom-cat theaters and the Broadway Arms Baths, which contained a video lounge. The Big Top and Tomcat converted from film to video projection before shutting their doors. The Broadway Arms Baths is now the site of a strip joint.

Hardest hit by the redevelopment threat is the Avon Theaters chain? Avon long has been an innovator in the adult entertainment field. In the late 1960s, they opened New York City's first all-male theater, the Park-Miller. Their Hudson theater helped popularize the "mixed combo" genre in the mid'70s, quickie features or loop packages centered around hetero interracial sex.

More recently, it has been live sex shows in between pics, and the nobudget, sado-masochism pics made by Phil Prince. Definitely outside 'normal' pornography, features like 'The Taming Of Rebecca' and 'Kneel Before Me' were heralded by lurid ad campaigns in the New York Post. Action consisted of shock value sex and star George Payne's psychopathic interpretations.

Two years ago. Avon had the Bryant, Doll, Paris, and Avon 7 theaters. First to go due to a lost lease was the cavernous Bryant on 42d Street between 6th Avenue and Broadway. Just weeks ago, the landlord refused to renew the lease on the Doll, a shoebox on 48th Street and 7th Avenue. Avon converted the all-male Follies back to the Avon 7. The chain is left with this house and the Paris, both dry hustle "strip joints" which occasionally throw on a reel of old hard-core in between "dancers."

City Crackdown

The Doll was the last adult theater to have live sex shows. They consisted of a girl doing a strip and her partner, joining her on stage for about 20 minutes of hartwore sex. Live sex shows have also been a staple of sex emporiums like Show World, but the AIDS epidemic has but an end to them.

Out an end to them, we have houses have been hurt by AIDS, especially since these theaters used to encourage audience cruising. 'Business has been less than half if was last year.' claims the manager of one. 'On the weekdays it's been really bad. But it's picked up a little on the weekends. With places like the Anvil and the Mine Shaft closed, people have no where else to go."

Theaters now try to discourage cruising and stay within "safe sex" guidelines. The 8th Avenue houses, the shoebox Eros and the huge Adonis, now have signs in their lobbies warning against audience sexual activity. The glory holes have been sealed. Dark alley-ways are now brightly lit.

Video's Effect

Video has had an effect on the adult houses. An increasing number are switching to video projection. The picture resolution on large video screen has improved and the cashier can "change reels" right from the boxoffice. There is also the advantage of not paying an operator, although what kind of deal the various chains have worked out with the projectionists' union retains ambiguous.

When the Eros switched to video last summer, it became the site for union picketers. The more overrealous ones would give theater patrons catcalls of "faggot" and fremember Rock Hudson." Theater employees would respond by calling the police. Eventually, and agreement was reached between management and the union.

Some of the largest, best kent firstrum straight houses have gone wideo. These include the Pussycal Grand, Kittykal, World, and Circus theaters, the last two part of the Sweetheart chain. Sweetheart's Frisco on 48th Street and 7th Avenue shows "Swedish Erotica" loop

packages on video.

While theaters take to the cost effective video projection, homevideo has caused a drop in their admission. David Christopher, X-rated actor/director, puts it best. "No one is going to the theaters anymore. Everyone has VCRs. When VCRs first became popular, porno producers had the opportunity to reach many people who had never seen an adult movie. Instead, there was an influx of non-quality, cheaply made product. The only thing that can draw people to the theaters is something sensational - something they haven't seen."

Title Twists

Formula, action-oriented hardcore still plays straight houses. Hollywood ripoffs still are being made. "Flashdance" metamorphosizes into "Flashpants" and "Fleshdance," "Porky's" into "Piggy's." A new wrinkle is hetero anal-sex pics. The Kittykat has run "Caught From Behind," "Girls Of The A-Team" and "Between The Cheeks," to name a few.

Interracial sex is making a comeback from its "mixed combo" beginnings. The trendsetter in this department is the west coast based Dark Brothers' "Let Me Tell Ya Bout White Chicks." A group of black men sound off about the title subject, have sex with two blonds. and engage in more nonsensical

yakkey yak The cheap shoi-on yideo look makes il seemilike a tape loop in Show World Ade Dark Brothers have recently released their answer pic, Let Me Tell Va Bout Black

Chicks

The gay market is glutted with gamey William Higgins productions displaying California surfer types "Beyond Hawaii," "Malibu Days," "Big Bear Night," "Preppy Summer" ad infinitum. A visible icon on the gay circuit is Rick Donovan, star of "Heroes" and "The Bigger The Better" - sort of a character cross between Jan-Michael Vincent and Joe Dallesandro. Interracial is also a factor in this department. An Eros staple is "Opposites Attract," in which a black man has sex with two white men to the thump of loud disco music.

Gay features, when not shot on video, are still in 16m. Since the demise of the Doll, the only theater showing straight 16m hardcore the old "one day wonders" and loop packages - is the Venus, on 45th Street and 8th Avenue. A typical Venus triple bill could include the "mixed combo" "Black Neighbors," the John Holmes loop package "Here Comes Johnny Wadd," and the Rene Bond oral sex spectacular "Teenage Fantasies."

Double As Bum Sheraton

The Venus' audience is composed primarily of minority males and homosexuals. Like the Eros next door, signs warning against sexual activity now have been posted. Because it's an all highter, open from 10 a.m. to 7 the next morning, it draws a regular crowd of sleepers who are undeterred by the price rising from \$3 to \$6 at 10:30 p.m. "It's still the cheapest hotel on 8th Avenue," states one patron.

While adult all-nighters were sprinkled liberally around Times Square, the other two remaining ones are the Harem and Moulin Rouge. The Harem, on 42d Street near 8th Avenue, shows straight pics, but in the words of one customer, "drew a lot of drag queens. They would come in dressed as men and change in the bathroom."

The theater recently switched to video projection and management attempts to keep the transvestities out. The balcony is "for couples only."

The Moulin Rouge, formerly the Omega, formerly the Nightshift, is the most notorious all nighter. Its 47th Street and 8th Avenue locale and 24-hour policy drew a variety of flotsam: pickpockets, grungy hustlers, diehard Johns, the unfortunate tourist.

Once showing ragged 16m prints through a treehouse-like rear projection booth, it's now video screens on both floors. An "orgy room" and a "Central Park ramble" — a bunch of fake trees in a line — have been closed due to the AIDS crackdown.

While the audiences at all nighters are the most extreme, each theater has its regular crowd. Firstrun straight houses still cater to businessmen and tourists. There's more gay cruising activity at \$1,99 triple bill hetero houses than at many of the all-male theaters.

For the broadest cross-section, there's the Brandt chain's Victory theater on 42d Street and 7th Avenue. Dirty old men, minority males, businessmen, tourists—all watching straight triple bills; Very occasionally will couples enter adult theaters. Couples chasers—men who flash in front of couples or attempt to engage them again three-some—aend to harass them.

may come from the supply end.
Less porno is currently being produced. Former porno star Bobby Spector says "it's AIDS. Nobody in the industry wants to refer to it by name — it's always 'the disease' or something like that — but everybody's afraid of it. Nobody want to be in these things anymore, which is why I quit."

Industry

Tromatized

by Bill Landis

ex. Death. Blood. Money. The four canons of Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz, the founders of Troma, the film company that wants to be New World or American International Pictures during their zeniths. Only a couple of vowels away from trauma, and too close to ignore the difference that two letters make.

The company has released 50 features over its bumpy decade-plus history, and Kaufman and Herz drool over the high jinks of Sam Arkoff or Roger Corman, the pharaohs of the cheapo-budget, slave-labor, colors-that-glare production values of films for the softcore sex and horror markets. There's always a Troma pic bouncing from one side of 42nd Street—The Deuce—to the other.

Their better known titles include Squeeze Play, The First Turn-On, Splatter U, and Bloodsucking Freaks. Troma's recent release, The Toxic Avenger, has received the best critical notices of any of their features, and favorable press in Barron's and the New York Times has helped Troma attract capital. Crain's New York Business recently stated that an investor in a Troma film stood a good chance of doubling his money within four years. Could be because Kaufman and Herz claim an average budget of \$800,000 per feature, and that, per Kaufman, they "eliminated a lot of the downside risk" by selling to cable, television syndicates, videocassette companies, and foreign markets. These things everybody says-but in Cannes, Kaufman conducted aerobics classes on the beach as a publicity stunt.

In protégé fashion, Kaufman cut his teeth working on John Avildsen's two most successful low-budget pictures, as a production assistant on *Joe*, the 1970 hard-hat revenge movie with Peter Boyle, and as production manager on *Cry Uncle*, an X-rated comedy about the sexual misadventures of a fat detective. The last Kaufman-Avildsen collaboration was the 1976 Oscar winner, *Rocky*.

Troma did location work and Kaufman had a walk-on as a drunk. Posters for *Rocky* decorate Troma's offices, hanging next to their own cheesecake-like campaigns for *Bloodsucking Freaks*, etc.

The Battle of Love's Return was Kaufman's first feature, which he coproduced, wrote, directed, and starred in. The G-rated comedy, released in 1971, also starred exploitation veteran Lynn Lowry. But there hasn't been a G in Kaufman's life since; Troma has been no stranger to hardcore porn.

Kaufman formed Melody Pictures to distribute porn, and its first release was *The Newcomers*, which he co-produced, photographed, and directed under the pseudonym "Louis Su." Billed as the first X-rated musical, the film displays early-Seventies New York porn regulars Harry Reems, Georgina Spelvin, and Marc (10½") Stevens. *Playboy* deemed it the first musical in which the production numbers end in ejaculation.

Louis Su made the Melody releases My Sex-Rated Wife and The Divine Obsession. Good reviews in Screw and a strong ad campaign helped Obsession—about the sexcapades of a young innocent who comes to New York hoping for a showbiz career and lands in a whipped cream orgy—obtain a marathon sixmonth run at the 59th St. Twin (now, the Manhattan).



"The Toxic Avenger."

Troma entered distribution in 1974. Screen World lists Troma's first releases as Les Nymphoteens, another Louis Suitem; Delora; and The Secret Dreams of Mona Q, directed by Kaufman's brother Charles, who later lensed the horror film Mother's Day. All were XXX fare.

Sugar Cookies, co-authored by Kaufman and director Theodore Gurshuny, was Troma's initial stab at the R-rated market. Originally it had a brief, unsuccessful run on the sexploitation circuit in 1973, but Troma re-edited it from X to R for re-release. Similar to Radley Metzger's softcore movies, Sugar Cookies involves a kinky triangle between a porno director, his star, and her lesbian lover. Its high point is a sex scene intercut with an autopsy. The presence of Andy Warhol superstars Ondine and Mary Woronov, along with Lynn Lowry, helped Sugar Cookies be visible, and the Village Voice, Soho News, and Interview reviewed it favorably. But Sugar Cookies' chief virtue-that it cannot be genre pigeonholed - also helped bury it.

Kaufman and Herz subsequently made a series of highly profitable T&A pics for the drive-in/grindhouse circuit. The first of these, Squeeze Play, was a baseball comedy which mixed nudity with nonstop bathroom humor. The poster featured women ready to play ball wearing bathing suits. (Kaufman claimed to Crains N. Y. Business that since the film's initial release in 1979, it has earned \$10 million at the boxoffice-and cost only \$300,000 to make.) Waitress! made laughingstocks of struggling actresses in New York; Stuck On You ridiculed a divorce; and The First Turn-On guffawed about virginity. The overriding motifs are barrages of fart jokes, panty raids, belches, unknowns in pants-down situations, and cameos by non-celebrities like Professor Irwin Corey. Scenes are flung together so haphazardly that the admittedly trivial storylines become indecipherable, and worse, the complete absence of production values renders the films' small budgets even lower.

The boxoffice success of the horror film acquisitions *Bloodsucking Freaks*, *Zombie Island Massacre*, and *Splatter University* (better known as *Splatter U*) opened up another profitable area for Troma. The recent in-house production, *The Toxic Avenger*, puts the sadistic and T&A pratfalls of prior features into a gore movie context: after being dunked in radioactive waste during a cruel prank, Melvin, a nerd, turns into a monster that kills criminals. A blind girl unwittingly becomes Melvin's girlfriend—and that is



the running gag. The Toxic Avenger is a one-joke movie, but it offers a coherent narrative and sense of pace absent from previous Troma productions. The normally conservative New York Daily News found it "hilariously tasteless," and the Village Voice felt it respected its intended audience—primarily 14- to 22-year-olds.

any Troma employees are recent film school grads hungry for valuable work experience, though the company has the reputation of a bucket shop operation. Two former production people at Troma agreed to describe the working conditions provided they be pseudonymous.

Bob S. answered an ad in the Village Voice. "They said I could work 14 hours a day, seven days a week for \$175. There was a guy there when I started who was making \$175 a week after two years. He started at zero, went up to \$50 a week, and worked his way up in small increments."

"You know how some people stab you in the back?" asked Gwen W. "Well, they stab you in the front. They let you know what the situation is. They pull no punches and are remarkably out front about who they are. I worked at a tenth of what I now make."

Gwen found the Troma offices in a Hell's Kitchen tenement "the filthiest place I've ever worked in. The cutting room, the physical space, the toilets. The assistants must sweep down the stairs and clean all the bathrooms. The paint is peeling off the wall, and to hide it they put up their gory posters, or ones of naked women in Squeeze Play.

"Being a woman working for Troma was great," said Gwen, then laughed. "Women do the 'women's' jobs, like serving the wine, and men do 'men's' jobs — carrying, lifting, painting. They ordered us down to the parties over the intercom (which I'm convinced they listen in on phone conversations with).

"Lloyd and Michael pride themselves on being Yale grads. They met in New Haven. They love each other. They play good cop/bad cop with the employees all the time, and the roles always change. Lloyd can be a very engaging personality. He can be incredibly charming and funny, but there's another side to him that can be really devious and cunning. And he can be incredibly cheap. Once he battled me about cab fare—they always get in fights with employees about money. The bill was \$14.50. Lloyd gave me \$15. He asked me for the change. I gave him the 50¢. He kept it.

"When buyers from foreign markets come to the office from France, Canada, Japan—the days when Michael and Lloyd both wear suits—they bring them through the entire building (which is amazing in itself) and say, 'We have the finest editing equipment in New York,' and then show them the Steenbecks, which are on their last legs. Anyone in the film business cannot believe it."

It's not surprising that, according to Bob, Troma is "a revolving door. Some people start in the office at reception; that job has seen a million people. If you make it past the first two weeks, you'll work your way into acquisitions or ancillary sales. It's all young people working there - 25 or younger. You'll get a beat on how to do your job without Michael yelling at you all the time. But it's about that time that all the yelling gets to you. Michael presents a very humorless and mean exterior. He yells a lot. And if you've been there for six months and you're competent, you'll get yelled at the most. They'll hurl all the responsibility at you. The employees get paid so little there is no monetary incentive to put up with the abuse. By the time you can be of some value to the company, you leave. Incompetence runs rampant there."

"When I worked at Troma I screamed more than I ever screamed. But as I look back," Gwen recalls, "it was a lot of laughs, even though it was horrendous. In some ways it made me stretch."

ne director becoming a key figure in Troma's organization is Richard Haines, who is also employed by them as post-production exec. An NYU film school grad, Haines began his career working on Kaufman's porno films. He functioned as sound editor on Madman

and Mother's Day. Haines produced, wrote, edited, and directed Splatter U, a 16mm slasher movie which Troma picked up. Since then, his stamp has appeared on much of Troma's product: he edited Stuck On You, The First Turn-On, and The Toxic Avenger, for which he shot the ending; he sanitized porn pictures for the R-rated market; cut the trailers; and designed ad campaigns.

A short, slightly rotund man with a mustache in his late twenties, Haines suggested this piece be about him: He is proud of his Troma films, and wants to "do Hollywood movies and make a lot of money." Haines co-directed *The Class of Nuke 'Em High* with Kaufman, the new Troma horror film. A companion piece to *The Toxic Avenger*, *Nuke 'Em High*'s story has high school students turning into nuclear mutations. Like *Toxic*, it was shot—naturally—in New Jersey.

James Nugent Vernon, one of the leads in *Nuke 'Em High*, liked the script. "Since Troma is a distributor, I know the film is going to be seen, and it could lead to bigger and better things for me."

Jack D., a supporting actor in *Nuke* 'Em High who asked that his real name not be used, described the atmosphere on the set. "When you got there, Lloyd and his co-director would be talking. They hadn't prepared any of the scenes beforehand. Part of the problem is that they don't pay crew members, just the higher technical people. Assistants, wardrobe—they don't get a dime. Wardrobe would show up with the wrong clothes all the time.

"The food was always terrible, on the level of Chef Boyardee canned spaghetti. Once there were a couple of pecan pies on the set. I noticed as I was finishing my slice that it was kind of green and hairy. Mold. Michael tried to push it off as pistachio. I heard later that they scraped the mold off the pies.

"If they just went that extra half a foot—giving people deferred payments instead of no money, or even better food, taking that extra two minutes to get a shot right—they would have people making an effort working for them. Instead, they have an army of people who hate their guts.

"As far as creativity goes, Lloyd was good to work with. When you came up with an idea, he'd think it over, go with it. Richard is very ungiving toward actors. If you have an idea or make a suggestion, he's quick to shut you up. He thinks actors can withstand any pain. 'The ends justify the means' is his favorite quote. While we were shooting the film, he

wanted the monster's tail to wrap around this actress and have the tail go up her back so it looked like it was going up her asshole."

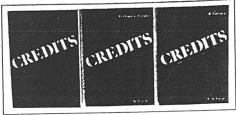
"I don't think splatter movies hate women," Haines says. "Men get mutilated, too. They're just generally misanthropic." The poster for *Splatter U*, which he designed, looms over the editing room. It shows a terrified cheerleader with her legs spread and about to be murdered. Haines then ran a tape of his third film, *Alien Terrorists*, which is still in production: a growth resembling a

giant testicle emerges from a green latex hand, as the soundtrack recites Haines' previous credits.

"Haines is a film freak into Technicolor," recalls Bob S. "He talks about it constantly. He enjoys watching Technicolor prints of stuff like Around the World in 80 Days." Haines, in fact, can describe in detail the color quality of numerous films from Blood Feast to The Godfather. He was enthused about Alien Terrorists, having fade proof prints made in China. "AIP prints," Haines chides, "they're all pink now."

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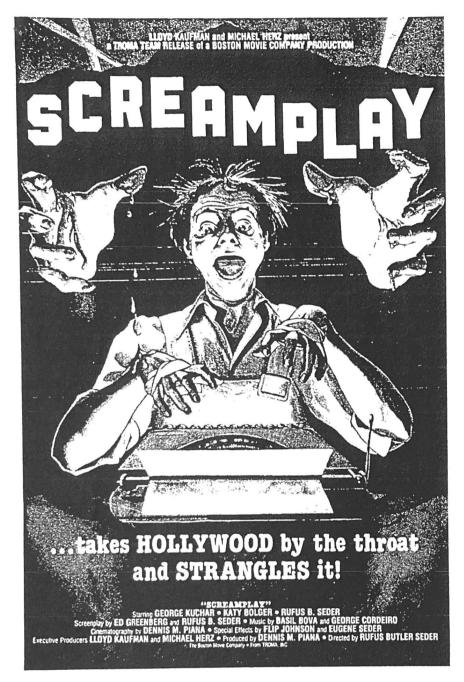
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roma's strategy involves producing two to three films a year and picking up around six. These acquisitions live up to expectations about exploitation films being extreme and offbeat. Three have recently resurfaced on The Deuce ("I once went there to check the crowd at *Splatter U*," says Haines. "You can get killed") as second and third features.

Two were written and directed by Joel Melvin Reed: Bloodsucking Freaks had a brief initial run in 1976 under the title The Incredible Torture Show. Troma picked it up in 1980. The film was cut and the rating was lowered to an R from an X, though the movie's graphics stayed pretty much the same, then surrendered altogether when the MPAA called Troma

on its exhibiting a version close to the X-rated one but billing it as R. The storyline is set in an S&M theater in New York where nude women are mutilated and killed. One woman has a hole drilled through her shaved head. Blood is then sucked out through a straw to the accompaniment of rinky-dink music. A favorable review in the Soho News when it was re-released helped the film get a midnight engagement at the 8th St. Playhouse, but it was booted out after Women Against Pornography picketed the theater.

G.I. Executioner was filmed by Reed in 1971 but was thinly released under its previous titles, Wit's End and Dragon Lady. A James Bondish action-adventure, it plotlessly meanders around loca-

tion work in the Far East and a nude shootout sequence. The movie is full of homosexual innuendoes atypical for its genre; particularly the scenes of men in harem pants and tiny pink vests.

Sweet Savior was already on its second and currently used title, The Love Thrill Murders, before Troma picked it up. Made in 1971 by Bob Roberts of Patty notoriety, it is the ultimate in the celebrity ripoff genre. Troy Donahue stars as Moon, a Charles Manson figure in a Tate murders storyline that ends with Donahue giving the finger to the American flag. This low-budget production, managed by Kaufman, is a mind-blowing mixture of bizarre softcore sex, bloody deaths, and dime store rendering of a real life tragedy. The Love Thrill Murders stands out as Troma's best release to date.

o not fear, Troma is here to stay and even has a burgeoning 1986-7 release schedule. Upcoming acquisitions include:

• Combat Shock. A Vietnam veteran returns home to unemployment and heroin addiction. In a climactic bloodbath, he kills the drug dealers, his family, and himself. "Explicit ugliness and revolting realism is the order of the day," says Variety.

• Fat Guy Goes Nutzoid. Three Jewish brothers obsessed with farting and male bonding.

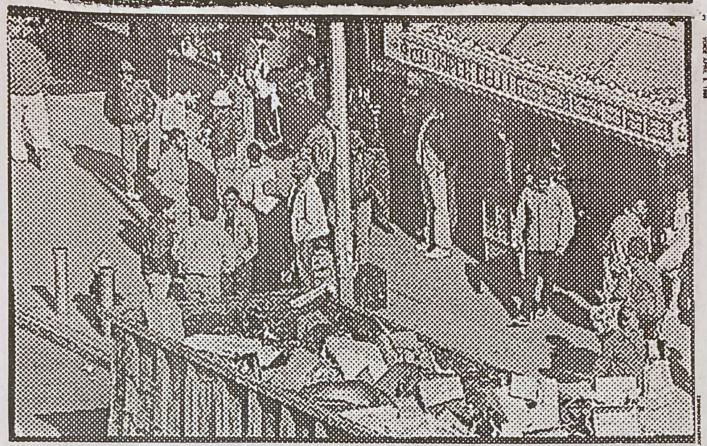
• Monster in the Closet. A spoof of Fifties horror movies with the biggest array of stars a Troma release has to offer: John Carradine, Stella Stevens, Howard Duff, and Henry Gibson. Variety found it "pleasant, occasionally funny."

• And don't forget Girls' School Screamers, Screamplay, and Nightmare Weekend.

As all their largely self-generated hype attests, Troma obeys the cardinal rules of exploitation: ham-fisted advertising in *Variety*; campaigns for movies not yet completed; foreign and cassette rights sales of movies before they have played theaters; and slight aspirations to respectability. Instead of following in the footsteps of Roger Corman, Troma could instead become the K-Mart version of Cannon Pictures.

Any exploitation fan knows that the shameless chase after the funky dollar is part of the genre's charm. In truest exploitation fashion, Troma's loud campaigns cater to people's basest desires, but the movies never make good on the lurid promises. They don't deliver. They aren't funny or shocking. They just bait and switch.

The Deuce is too good for Troma.



HOOKED

The Madness in Methadone Maintenance

125th Street near Lexington Avenue. around 9 a.m.: "Barry took me up to 125th Street to buy Juice. There's a coffee shop downstairs from a clinic with people shorting '60,' '80,' '100' outside. There's a big sign on a two-way mirror which you can see right through warning against sleeping, nall clipping, hair combing, spitting, and selling drugs. Everybody is there was selling their prescriptions or takehomes. I bought a guy's socied bettle of

60 for \$18."

ETHADONE WAS
developed by the
Germans during
World War II as a
substitute for
morphine. They
named it Dolophins in honor of
Adolf Hitter. It's
a synthetic opiatta designed to
alleviate severe
pain.

Since then, the state of New York has used it for a different purpose—to reduce junkies' criminal behavior and illicit drug activity, and then reintegrate them into society. Because methadone can block a heroin high, it was initially seen as a cure for heroin addiction. Now the state claims it helps stop the spread of AIDS by arresting needle use. It does neither.

The effects of heroin are described dif-

The effects of herom are described differently by each oner. On one end is an intense suphoria, a feeling of total inner peace, and an ability to slip in and out of a dreamlike state known as nodding. At

the opposite end, chronic users need a cartain amount regularly to feel normal, to get straight. A heavy user may have to get straight twice a day. Addicts' bodies have become so dependent on the chemical that when it's taken away withdrawal sickness results—weakness, aches, flu symptoms, etc. Heroin is a wildly inconsistent drug sold under hundreds of brand names by dealers who cut it with everything from Nestle' Quik to other drugs. Most dope users aren't sniffers; they're hardcore needle freaks. They seek the rush—the taste, smell, and sudden mental impact—of the drug when injected. They fixate on the sight of their own blood filling a syrings, the act of self-mutilation, and not knowing whether they'll live or die after pushing the syrings's plunger down. Many speedball, mixing cocaine with heroin for a roller coaster rush.

Methadone is the most powerful and subjective of all narcotics, far more addictive than heroin. One person can overdose on 20 mg, while a tolerant individual will go into withdrawal without his deily

dose of 100. The most common form of methadone is an oral solution in which a 40-mg disket dissolves to a grainy consistency in orange drink.

Unlike heroin, which is felt for about eight hours, the effects of methadone persist for a day or two. When you first go on the program, the methadone not only gets you straight but gets you stoned. A methadone high is a more overwhelming suphoria than a heroin high, not unlike walking on pillows with your head in the clouds. For the first few days, clinics keep raising client's doses even though most are still stoned from yesterday's. Clinics call this a period of "initial drowsiness" while the patient is being "stabilized." Stabilization—that is, addiction—is established when you need the dose to get straight and are no longer wrecked on it.

How Methadonians feel their dose once on the program is, again, subjective. Some say it just gets them straight while others say they always get a buzz. The dose which supposedly blocks a heroin Continued on page 33 Continued from page 31

high is 80 mg, but most are on 60. Those on high doses like 90 or 100 are usually older and will probably live out their lives on it. Some have been on the program 20 years. There are 34,000 people on methadone in the state, 29,000 in the city.

While methadone reduces heroin use, it encourages other forms of drug abuse. Many users aren't satisfied with a buzz every day and use methadone as a lsunching pad to nod out from the multi-tude of pills which interact with it. Taken orally, methadone does not eliminate the needle fixation. While some people on the program cannot feel any dope they shoot, they go with coke for that IV rush and use pills for a pseudospeedball effect. Since booze also boosts methadone, alcoholism has always been a problem at

All narcotics block pain and give a false sense of well-being. Methadone is the strongest narcotic. Using something this powerful will emotionally lobotomize a person. Those who continue with seriously criminal or malicious activities while on methadone push the pedal down full force. They have no feelings about what they're doing and turn into bigger scumbags than they were when they were do-

ing dope.

It's not hard to get on a program. All you have to do is substantiate a year's daily heroin or opiate abuse. Your proof

THEY'RE THE PEOPLE WHO MOAN "Vs. PLASS" ON 14TH STREET. HANG OUT IN COFFEE SHOPS. **HUNCHED OVER. EYES** HALF SHUT, MOUTHS OPEN-"MULTI-**PROBLEM" PATIENTS**

can be in the form of a doctor's note, an emergency room report, a letter from a parent or a spouse, or physical evidence like track marks. There are 130 clinics in New York State, 100 of them in the metropolitan area. In Manhattan, there are clinics in Gramercy Park, Harlem, the Lower East Side, and the Port Authority area. The New York State Division of Substance Abuse Services funds 99 per cant of the state's methadone clinics and monitors unfunded programs. The federal government oversees things and com-municates with DSAS through the Bureau of Chemotherapy Services. Medicaid pays about half the program's approximate \$60 million annual cost while DSAS supplies the other half. Taxpayers' dollars pay to get Methadonians fucked up. Private patient fees are a drop in the bucket.

Without much hard evidence, the state feels that Methadonians who abuse alcohol, pills, and/or coke are a small, unfairly stereotyped minority. It likes to call these people "multi-problem" patients. They're the people who mosn "Vs, Place" as you pass them on 14th Street. Little chisters of Methadonians hanging out on corners or in coffee shops near clinics hunched over, eyes half shut, mouths open—"multi-problem" patients.

CIRO

CIRO JUST GOT A Pepsi. He's leaning against the back entrance of the post office on 24th Street and Lexington Averus. The old high school jacket he's wearing hangs off of him-he used to be a bigger guy. Ciro is an anonymous-looking Letino who's missing a hand. He's used to playing either, suffering cripple or tough guy. "My hand.—I lost it in a niest grinder when I was a list. We mitta lotta

Ciro 37. He's been on the comman 18 sers. "One program they had was down on the piers in the Village. They used to give out 150, even 200 then. I'm on 100. What I tell any fucked up guys out there who buy juice on the street is get on the program. It's easy. If you want, I'll take you over to my program in the Bronx.

"Every day, I gotta take two trains to come over and hang here after I dose. I was on a program around here. The cops caught me sellin pills around the post office. Those muthafuckas made such a stink over at my clinic that I got thrown off. Next day, I was on another clinic.'

Ciro eats six pills and washes them down with a swig of Pepsi. "I like Elavils. They make me nod. I like to shoot coke. too. Green Diamond puts out a big dime on 9th and D. Ain't no bag of dope they're puttin' out now that cuts through my 100, though."

Ciro's wife passes by the check-cashing place with a stroller full of fat, sleepy, adorable kewpie. She's already sold her 80-mg take-home. She's a short woman who looks much older than 35.

Ciro and his wife never work. SSI, welfare, and Medicaid cover their basic expenses. Ciro pays for his highs by making doctors at Medicaid mills and selling the pills they prescribe. He also winds up sampling way too much of his own product. Sometimes he complains of seizures.
"This bump on my head. Last weekend, I had a seizure from not havin' enough

"You know, I get a take-home every week. If anyone wants to buy it, I'll even split it up into two parts. I eat Elavils Sunday instead of drinking my takehome. If anybody wants, I'll even split it

in half and sell you a 50.
"Last weekend, I didn't have enough Elavils to cover me and my head went cruck into the wall. Yeah, Elavils usually hold me all weekend, but by the time I get to the clinic Monday, boy am I SICK!"

SIDE EFFECTS

THE USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC drugs like Elavil or Placidyl on top of methadone can lead to brain damage. Mark Parrino, the director of Medical M, the Geamercy Park Medical Group clinic, acknowledged this but tried to obscure the issue by mentioning irrelevant drugs like angel dust. He claimed that "if we assess that a patient is addicted to a pill, we hospitalize them for pill detoxification. There are a number of patients in treatment whose motives are not always pure in the sense of getting rehabilitated."

If Ciro tried to cold turkey off metha-

done, his pain would be unbearable. Paul Rodgers's novel about Times Square, Saul's Book, describes methadone with-drawal vividly: "Talk about being sick. Kicking a methadone jones is ten times Kicking a methadone jones is ten times worse than kicking dope. You feel like somebody's poking hot needles into your bones. You get cramps. You shit like a goose and it all comes out white. You think you're gonna die."

A baby can be born addicted to a mothadone assertion of the contract of the contr

er who uses narcotics, and normally, doctors are extremely cautious about prescribing any narcotics during pregnancy or childbirth. Withdrawal in a newborn occurs within the first few hours or days of life. It can kill the child. Symptoms include irritability, excessive crying, tremors, fever, vomiting, and diarrhes.

tremors, ever, voming, and darrise.
Imagine this as your first experience.
Even though the Physician's Deak Reference says that "eafe use [of methadone] in pregnancy has not been established in relation to possible effects on fetal devel-opment," the state would like people to believe that a Methadonian can give birth to a nonaddicted baby. There are about 50,000 children of Methadonians. Charles La Porte, Deputy Commissioner of DSAS, admits that "a percentage of these, pp. don't have the exact percent, are born addicted. But after detoxingwe've followed space of them for 15 years—they are no prolonged medical or birth defects in that child except withdrawal

Mark Parrino felt that "withdrawal





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maintained at 80 mg and their children have been born with very few complications. There are women on 20 mg where the children were born with withdrawal symptoms. We've never seen any problem where a woman who is not maintained on methadone produces an addicted baby in withdrawal because the man maintained.

The rule of thumb is to keep pregnant women on as stable a dose as possible. Lowering the dose can cause a shock to the fetus. Initially, expectant mothers were detoxed before their second trimester, but it was found that they would begin abusing heroin and/or pills, as many Methadonians do anyway. "One of the most terrible things to see are the children born to women who abuse co-caine and pills," said Parrino. "Tve seen it working in hospitals. It's an awful

sight Charles La Porte has been working in the methadone program since it was first tested at Beth Israel. He makes clear that the ultimate justification for methadone is the bottom line. "Yes, there's people hanging out on my street, yes, we see people with alcohol problems, but the problems would be greater to society without this drug. Not evaluating whether a guy's loitering or if a guy's using cocaine, alcohol—look what it's impacting on the taxpayer and what it's impact-ing on crime. An addict in the street, with the total cost in theft, law enforcement, health cost, and public assistance, costs the taxpayers about \$44,000. To maintain him on methadone costs us \$2300 to \$2400. Before treatment only 6 per cent of an addict's income is legal. Then you see the reversal-93 per cent is legal. Methadone eliminates their need for heroin so it eliminates their need to commit crimes to pay for their habit. It's documented over and over-the longer the person is in treatment, the less crime he

Sounds okey, you might think. But even if the state's statistics are accurate, they have nothing to do with the reality of Methadonians' daily lives.

commita'

NADINE

THE WEST 30s ARE as sleazy as Times Square but in a different way. The constant flow of commuters between the Port Authority and Penn Station, the laborers and businessmen, lend an air of laborers and businessmen, send an air or normality. Hidden below are garment sweatshops, welfare hotels, Asian health spes, semilegal businesses, and metha-done clinics. Korean delis are everywhere. They stay open long after the businesses have closed, when the area turns over to

its transient night population.

A notorious spot for pills, shooter's coke, and crack is 38th Street between Eighth and Ninth. The Koppel Clinic, which handles a lot of gentlemen like Ciro, has been there for years. Pill sales-men cluster near the 24-hour deli on the corner of Righth Avenue. At the other end of the street is the coke/crack scene, populated mostly by Times Square scam

artists and players.

Nadine is a light-skinned black woman, so thin she resembles a walking stick of gum, who conducts her life within a few blocks of 39th Street. She lives with her mother in a Ninth Arenus tenement. She's on the program. Besides receiving wefare and food stamps, she works off the books. She takes messages for minor actors, abortionists, and porno flotsam at a soldy answering service. Nadine likes to a see she's 43 even though she's younger. Her wardrobe is dominated by clingy onepiece cotton/polyester dresses which she always wears sans bra. "I sin't got nothing to put in there, anyway." Sometimes she even wears her house slippers to work.

"Twe been on for eight years. I'm on 70. I used to do dope back in the '70s, when I was in the music industry. I used to be a backup singer. I used to date a lot of

W/30 LINES

"I used to shoot coke, but I don't

feel like gettin' that rush I crack it up little. I just don't feel right until I get a advance and go get a little somethir down on Ninth. It hits me right as I'l comin' on to my dose. Damn!"

Nadine buys jumbos-20s of cracl She'll consume another jumbo or two b the evening. She pays for her get-high by wholesaling Medicaid-mill pills to friend on the corner of 39th and Eightl Sometimes I take a few Vs if the crac gets me too edgy. I get two take-homes. sell one of them to this guy in my build ing. The day I skip I have a few Vs and couple of coolers. It holds me.

"Since I got a good gig goin', hey, I'm model patient. I don't start no trouble a

NOT ALL METHADONIANS USE **NEEDLES, BUT MANY** ARE PILLHEADS WHO PREFER PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO STREET PRODUCT, SOME LEAD A SEMBLANCE OF A PRODUCTIVE LIFE.

the clinic. Nobody sees me hangin' out. My counselor thinks it's good, me workin' and all. Hey, I can still party and I get my clean urines from my cousin. What they don't know won't hurt them."

IMAN SELLS PILLS on 39th Street and Eighth Avenue, across the street from Koppel. He's the middleman between those who obtain pills through Medicaid mills and those who buy them. "I am Lebanese. Because of political reasons, I have lived in the U.S. the last few years. My situation is complicated, because I have a lot of family—aunta, cousins, grandmother. They know what I do and they're always coming around here starting trouble, shaming me. I speak seven languages.
"I don't do any drugs at all. Gambling's

my thing. If, at the end of the day, I have \$200, I'll put it on a horse. If I made

\$1000 I'd put it on a horse.

The first person I saw sell pills was when I was in a men's shelter. It was my first time in the city. This black guy said, Hey, there's money in this, people buy Va. So I went to a Medicaid doctor, a Chinese guy. I told him I was severely depressed and had trouble sleeping. He gave me 10 yellow Valiums. The black guy told me, Til sell 'em,' and did all 10.

"When I came to 39th Street, another black guy asked if I wanted to sell pills. I made another doctor for 30 yellows. My friend came back in 10 minutes with \$15. He showed me the basic pills to sell-Valium, Darvocet, Codeine. I made doctors-two, three doctors a day. I wore out a Medicaid card in six months. I've been arrested 25 times. I always get out in three days.

"A lot of the people on the program down here, they still shoot up, they get coke down at the other corner. A lot of people who used to be on the program or stopped shooting heroin buy things like Valiums or Codeines, too.

"I don't sell Placidyl or Elavil. People say they feel them on top of their methadone, but I can't stand those people. One time this girl who did Elavils came up to me. She kept talking to me the same thing over and over-those people, they always say the same thing over and over. I had to talk dirty to her-and I never talk this way, because I am a gentleman-just so she'd get away from me."

Although according to La Porte half of those tested for exposure to AIDS on the program came up positive, AIDS has made it almost impossible for a Methadonian to get thrown off the program. Even one who physically threatens staff or patients can quickly be referred to

another clinic. Not all Methadonians use needles, but many continue to get high on pills. Some are medicine heads who prefer the consistency of prescription drugs to erratic street product. Some manage to lead the semblance of a normal, productive life. Held up as examples of those making progress despite continued drug prob-

lems, they constantly postpone getting off methadone while blathering about rehabilitation.

BARRY

BARRY LOOKS LIKE A throwback to Saturday Night Fever. Wide rayon tie, huge lapels, flared slacks. Sort of like disco's gone to Wall Street 10 years too late. "I just bought these pants for two dollars. Two dollars! I'm not saying they're great, but they match well with this jacket I have. I can wear this outfit to work." He orders an éclair at a doughnut shop. There's no cream in it. He begins com-plaining loudly. "Hey, I don't take this shabby treatment from some broad behind a counter."

Barry maintains a job. He sells com-puter paper on commission. "But I also work in the industry—the adult enter-

"I STARTED SHOOTING **COKE AFTER DRINKING** JUICE" SAYS BARRY "WHEN YOU BUY JUICE ON THE STREET AND DON'T TAKE IT EVERY DAY YOU ALMOST NEED COKE, YOU GET SO OUT

tainment industry. I was in one of those big budget, half a million dollar pornos a couple of years ago. I was even in an orgy scene of a Hollywood movie—I had a taste of what it's like to be legitimate. The market got pretty gutted, so I mostly do my day job. I only work for some producers, the better ones, but the other day I got asked to take an AIDS test for a movie. They asked all the guys but none of the girls. If I'm a carrier, I don't want to know it.

Barry's been on and off methadone for five years. He has been using drugs most of his adult life. "I've always liked pot—

smokable kind-chasin the dragon. When I started shooting up, I did some great heroin. I also did a lot of pharmaceuticals. I used to love Percodans and Codeines, but I need five of them just to get started. Trouble is, they make you mean-you don't feel when you're on them. I ended up on the program in San

"After I had blown a lot of money on the West Coast and had gotten too in-volved with drugs, I moved back to New York. I got a really cheap apartment through the Voice on Ninth Avenue. I was making a lot of money between a regular job and the industry. I started spending a lot of it on the Dilaudids and dope in my

Around the time Pressure Point started, I decided that I really needed help—I was addicted—and that if I stayed around my area I was sure I would get arrested. I was in jail for four days in California, in a jail where they gave me Vs to sleep because I was dopesick, but it was frightening. I never want to go to jail

"So I went for treatment in Minnesota. Some hospital facilities detox you by making you drink three times a day and not telling you how much they lower your doses by. A lot of treatment facilities require group therapy sessions. If a guy's doing dope or drinking a bottle of gin, they're both using it to block out their problems. They both have the disease. I learned to accept the fact that I have a disease. Programs help you get jobs out there, usually menial ones. The main event of every day is breakfast after you

"They have a lot of signs in malls warning that if you shoplift you go to jail.
It's true there. It's harder to boost there. I used to boost stuff when I was a dope addict in New York. I don't since I'm on juice, but I shoplift like crary. Small things, like I have a million of these half size Bic lighters at home.

"So I came back here drug free. I stayed with my family out on Long Island. I wish they could love me for myself. I wish they'd think it was a disease. I went to a lot of Narcotics Anonymous meetings and stayed sober. Someone even me about a guarter ounce of Maxigave me about a quarter ounce of Mexi-can sense. It was great but I flushed ti—I just didn't feel right amoking it. I smoke about 10. junts a day, on the state of the sense. about 10 joints a day now, but that's because it kicks in the juice. I was so clean that if I took one yellow Valium— one 5 mg Valium!—I'd still feel it three

days later.
"Then I got what's called in meetings 'pink clouding'—everything's going fine for you, you're off drugs and then you think it's OK to start fucking around with them again. I started eating all these pills. I also started buying juice around the clinics on 23rd Street and 125th Street. Since I got off treatment, I never abot dope in the city again, I never fixed. I like that with juice you know what you're getting. But I started shooting a you're getting. But I started anothing a lot of coke after drinking juice. When you buy juice on the street and don't take it every day you almost need coke you get so out of it. Unlike dops, you can't do juice once a week let alone two or three times without getting addicted. So all of these things led me to be on methadone

today.
"I got on my clinic because I paid my girlfriend Perri \$20 for a letter saying she knew I had a history of drug problems. I knew Perri before she was in the industry, when she was a pothesd. We became heroin addicts together. She works for an escort service and still does movies. Her real name is Sheila but she hates it, says it's too Jewish. I think it's a beautiful name. I wish she could be as proud of being Jewish as I am. Every day she goes to the clinic, usually drinks extra. Then she'll eat a bunch of Va, smoke pot, and watch soep operss. It's terrible—it's almost like she's one of those old people on

100, "I only pay \$12 a week for the clinic because I showed them one of my low pay of his scale life. I want times. I liked to saiff
coke, but once you've dobe opiates, you always need to do the opiate with the
coke. I first not addicted to heroin when I m a pillheed. They're like medication to

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Continued from precessing place and mornime. I think of them that way. Like an aspirin with your coffee and doughnut in

the morning. "That's how I take Darvon-Ns. Every Monday before I go to the clinic I feel a little sick. I think everyone feels a little sick on Mondays before going to work So
I take two Darvon-Ns before getting on
the train. Each Darvon-N is like drinking two and a half extra milligrams of methadone. They're cousins to methadone. They only work if you're on methadone or if you're dopesick. My doctor told me they're hard on the liver, which is why I've cut down on them, considering that

I've had hepatitis before.
"If I'm nervous, I might take two blue or four yellow Valiums with my coffee after I dose. I have a Va habit. I eat about five or air blues a day. When I first got on the clinic they found Darvons and Vs in my urine. I told them 60 wasn't covering me so they raised me to 70. What could they find in my urine, anyway? No big deal—pills—not coke or heroin. Typical

"The clinic's a plain storefront with nothing outside. It looks either like a government office or a therapy center. I go during the early morning, the time only for people who work. I see people in suits, construction workers, limo drivers. A lot of the time a person will look real together and the only thing that'll give them away is their worn sneakers—people on the program always seem to have worm-out sneakers. They do a lot of

When I go to dose, this black nurse who sits behind glass holds up one 40 mg disket, breaks up another and holds up the total in front of me. She says '70.' She makes me sign a chart with my name and dose with a separate pencil that only peoper on the program touch. You see these big bottles of orange drink by where the nurses sit. Most people—like me—gulp it down and take a rinse or two. Some people are annoying, like some of the old Spanish or black ladies who stand there bullshitting with the nurse, sipping their juice, while you're behind them sick or in a hurry to get to work.

"Everybody has the good sense not to

get into a fight at the clinic or near it. Teams of counselors walk around the block to make sure nobody's hanging out or in coffee shops within a three block radius. It's really hard to get kicked off the clinic. I like having a counselor I can talk to. He tells me useful things like 'If you had stomach cancer, Barry, you wouldn't hate yourself. You have a disease. It's nothing to be ashamed of. You're getting a form of chemotherapy to

dend has signed an Octabance and base like this because sometimes I feel ashamed to be on methadone.

The reason I like Valium so much is that they relax you. That's why they're so popular. They're totally different on juice. They make you nod—it almost feels like a dope nod. But then-it's just disgusting, you get addicted to them real fast. I buy packages of Vs from Medicaid mills near the coffee shop on 125th Street where I also buy extra juice.

"I try not to drink extra too often because between the extra and the pills my dose can get thrown off. It won't hold me and I'll get sick. Every Friday, even before I was on this program, I'd buy this guy's 40. John is pretty together. He used to be a construction worker. He wasn't a dope addict for too many years. He was on 20 for a long time. He got hurt at his job and they doubled his dose. I really admire him for being able to skip a day. He says he'll drink some beer, maybe have a few Darvons-he likes to drink beer, but they really frown on alcohol at clinics. I also buy John's urine. I want to have enough clean urines to get another take-home-I hate coming into the clinic

on Saturdays.

"Methadone decreases your sex drive a little. You can come on it, but it doesn't feel the same. You don't get the same

rush I had sex with Perri recently afte drinking extra. I was on 100 mg and I stil came! It made me feel good to know this I know that if I have to do a movie I'll b able to.

"In a way I hate being on juice. It's : jail. You can't cold turkey off it—you'l get unbelievably sick. But I'd like to go to Miami on vacation and I doubt my clinic would give me two weeks worth of take homes or if there's a clinic near where I'c

stay. You have to tell your clinic before

you do any traveling.
"By Halloween I'd like to be off. I've got to detox myself from the Vs with Ativans—Ativan covers a Vs habit bur don't give you seizures when you eventu don't give you setzures when you eventually stop taking them. When you get of all the pills, you even feel your does again. I'm so jealous of the people who are on 35 or below—they get Dolophing in their juice. Dolophine comes in pill. and it takes the nurse longer to crust

them up. It's cleaner and I've heard you feel it more intensely. I don't think is would be a bad thing if I stayed on juice ϵ little longer. It would be good if I even go off by Thanksgiving, but if I have to I'l

DICK

stay on until early next year."

DICK LOOKS AND SOUNDS like Rod Serl ing via the Bronx. He's been a junkie for 20 years. So far, he's had three stays or the methadone program. Dick always seems to have a job but makes quick exits. The bland, out-of-date office clothes his mother buys him add to his anonymity

"I started with a joint in an elevator when I was 17. A year later I was shoot-ing dope and coke. I started stealing because I got hooked. Me and my friend had a thing where we'd drive around. We'd look for an old lady with a purse on an empty block. I'd get out, grab her purse, and we'd drive away. I got caught and had to do six months. I've been busted 22 times for boosting, possession, dealing, passing out in the old Union Square

"I first was on methadone 10 years ago. I turned into a bigger coke fiend than I was when I was doing dope and coke. I'd start shooting coke from early in the day. I ended up taking 15 to 18 blue Valiums a day. If I didn't take five after I dosed I would get sick. The clinic put me in the hospital to detox. It was very depressing.

"I went back to using dope and coke again. The second time I was on the program, 48th Street and Ninth Avenue was my neighborhood. I used to sell my take-home, hustle, scam up there. They used to sell 20s of dope in that area, but back then it was like Dilaudid city. Everyone had 'em. Sometimes I like Dilaudids better than dope. Ive done 12, 15 over a day. I like the rush—hot flashes going up and down the back of your neck.
Eventually I got thrown off the clinic.
They did a 21 day detox.

"I moved back to the Bronz. For a while, I was working as a paralegal—an easy job where I mostly rode the subway all day—and only getting high once or twice a week. One day I went down to the park on 12th Street and Avenue B to cop Third World dope with this kid I knew. Vinny. He gets busted for works. I end up copping Blackbird instead. I did all four bags at once in the bathroom of my brother's building and OD'd. The doorman opened it and I fell out If they didn't rush me to a hospital I would be

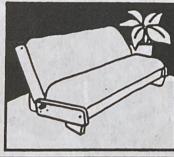
"I started going to a lot of NA meetings. Sometimes I'd go to them when I'd try to cut down on getting high. NA is a good organization. You learn that you have a disease. They say all persons with drugs should put them on the table but I never see anybody do that. I went to meetings and stayed straight for about two months, except for a slip I had-I almost OD'd again and spent \$150.

"I got a job as a proofreader working nights. I started getting high again. They caught me shooting up in the bathroom at work and fired me. My habit got too expensive, so I just went on the program

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"By being on the program, I get welfare. Even though I get it, I still work. I got a job as a summons server—it's off the books. That's the good thing about the program—you can work and still col-lect welfare, food stamps."

Dick seems to have no emotions about anything but getting high. "There's this girl I fuck but I hate her. She lives in my spertment building in the Bronx. She cooks for me so I don't need to spend anything on groceries. Her ex-old man is in the joint. She used to be on the

program.
"I'm on 60. Even though methadone is stronger than dope, you'll only get a buzz the first few days you're on. Then it just makes you straight. It doesn't make me feel satisfied like dope and coke."

LONG TERM

THEORETICALLY, THE LESS time you've been doing dope, the shorter your stay on methadone. On the other hand, if you want to remain on the program for life, so be it. The state's rationale is that a biochemical change may have occurred in the body from years of heroin abuse. Thus a person needs to maintain a nar-cotic balance. (If this is true, how can anyone ever stop?) Still, a clinic must detox a patient who so wishes even if it

goes against medical advice.
Withdrawal flushes most narcotics out
of the body within three to five days. Methadone remains in the system for two weeks after the last dose, and withdrawal is much more severe. Yale researcher Herbert Kleber believes this is because methadone lodges in the intestinal folds, which would also explain why constipa-tion is such a common side effect. Other frequently cited side effects include increased sweating and decreased sex drive.

Conclusive evidence of serious adverse effects of methadone is difficult to obeffects of methadone is difficult to ob-tain. The state claims it's safe. Commis-sioner La Porte told me, "You will hear myths that it rots your bones, it rots your teeth. It doesn't eat calcium. The state of New York would not sponsor anything that was in any way deteriorating to the individual." But narcotics lower your blood sugar and thus make you crave sweets. Methadonians tend to eat a lot of candy and junk food. They don't have milt upless it's its crasm or in their orf. milk unless it's ice cream or in their cof-fee. While the substance itself may not eat calcium, it's not conducive to healthy

New patients are given a physical. But since methadone masks pain, it can mask the symptomatic pain of a disease. Most Methadonians consider almost any ache or pain the result of pill or coke excesses, or dosages thrown off by drinking extra or selling a take-home. Consumer Guide's book Prescription Drugs cites a litany of major illnesses that warrant close monitoring while one is on methadone. Head injuries and mental disturbances are in-cluded. Who can tell in the midst of a

Those Methadonians who abuse co-Those Methadonians who abuse co-caine or alcohol deplete their already low vitamin and mineral intake. "The alcohol problem," said La Porte, "is serious be-cause many of the people, because of hep-atitis, have seriously damaged livers to begin with and alcohol only compounds it. Many of them die from chronic cirrho-sis of the liver or angina and other types of heart problems. We don't have the

The city was running many of the methadone programs in the early '70s. By 1973, methadone-related deaths outnumbered dope ones for the first time. Anyone with no tolerance for narcotics who tries methadone is in immediate danger

of overdosing. Commissioner La Porte denied any recreational use of methadone. "Most addicts who buy on the street buy because they can't get into treatment and it's

done then spend \$100 on beroin and here to buy three times a day. A person in the system stands a prayer of setting better. A person not in the system is not going to

"SINCE I'VE BEEN get any better."

VINNY

VINNY WORKS AT A record store in mid-town. He's what hippies would call a town. He's what hippies would call a head. He has a long shag, likes Led Zep-pelin, and claims that "pot is my only vice goin' now. For four years I shot speedballs. The shit totally chewed me up. I had heard from a lot of different people that speedballs were the ultimate thrill I guess that's what led me to do it. You get the taste and the rush from the coke just as soon as you draw blood intoyour works. Then the dope comes on and makes everything right, lasts a few hours. I think everybody who does it likes sticking a needle in themselves, likes the sight of their own blood. It's a whole death wish thing too—you can get killed doing it like David Kennedy.

it his David Kennedy.
"I started going to the Lower East Side
with my friends from where I lived in
Jersey. I've also copped in midtown on
Ninth Avenue and in East Harlem. The more I got into it the more people on the program I'd run into. They'd be buying nickels of coke all the time. They all

CLEAN, PEOPLE ON THE PROGRAM REALLY PISS ME OFF." SAYS VIHINY "ME AND MY WIFE DON'T MAKE A LOT AND WE'RE PAYING FOR THESE ASSHOLES OUT OF OUR TAXES."

looked real old, like they were collapsing into themselves. People on low doses said they'd speedball when they'd want and

they'd speedball when they'd want and get straight every day with juice. They'd feel dope on top of their juice.
"The first person I knew on a program was Peter. He was a real nut. He looked it, too—he'd wear one of those old alkie raincoats, the kind that you see Thunderbird bottles hansing out of I knew him. bird bottles hanging out of. I knew him

from the coke places on the Lower East-Side. When he was doing dope, he'd do about eight dimes a day—almost a bun-dle—but only a nickel or two of coke. It got too expensive for him, so he went on the program. The first few days they brought him from 30 to 60 and he was brought him from 30 to 60 and he was nodding out all over the place. Pretty soon he got so used to it that he could double up—drink his take-home after dosing—and wouldn't nod. He was always acreaming 'I can't shit!'

"Peter couldn't feel any dope he shot, but he had to use that needle. He started shooting more and more coke and came down with Vs. He schizzed himself out. Those nickels and dimes of coke were anything from 10 to 30 per cent cocaine, and then other shit like speed that the dealer could've made in his bathtub, vitadealer could've made in his bathin, vitamin B12, quinine, procaine, even meat
tenderizer. They give you a rush, all right,
and they give you this one-track mind to
go back and get more. You do the cotton over and over again for the taste. It's

borrible.

'Then Peter started steeling all this stuff from his job. He'd fence it through a stuff from his job. He'd fence it through a stuff from his job. He'd fence it through a stuff from his job. stuff from his job. has define it intogra used electronics store. I was over his place on Avenue B once. There were, like, six new color TV sets going at once. He had all these books laying in these little Continued on next page

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*D.J. Carlisi, M.D., P.C.

piles. They were all over the place-he was like a mole man or something. Shit. And these books! Naked Lunch-of course-laying next to beat-up science and meal management textbooks. One time he sold me a capful of his juice— about 10 mg—for \$10. Little did I know that I could've bought a 30 mg take-home instead. What a creep.

"Eventually, Peter tried to get off juice, pilla, everything by buying two bundles of dope and taking a long bus trip. It didn't work. He ended up trying to throw him-self off a roof and detoxing in the Bellevue nut ward. Yeah, that Peter, what a

nut. I heard his boss was going to put a hit on him for all those missing TVs. "All the years I did speedballs I never thought of going on a program. That fuck-up Peter was enough to scare anyone away. But a friend of mine who was on it, this guy Larry, sold me on the idea that it was a cheaper way to get high. Larry took me up to 125th Street to buy juice. There's a coffee shop downstairs from a clinic with people shouting '60,' '80,' '100' outside. There's a big sign on a two-way mirror which you can see right through warning against sleeping, nail clipping, hair combing, spitting, and selling drugs. Everybody in there was selling their prescriptions or take-homes. I

"I drank about man or it at non smoked a joint. About an hour later, I was sitting up and went into a deep nod. In its way it was like doin' two, maybe three good bags of dope. In another way it had a feeling stronger than dope but nothing natural about it—it was almost like I was an animal that had been shot with a tranquilizer gun. The next day I drank the rest and stayed high all day. The feeling came back by itself the third

day, even though I hadn't taken any.
"I bought juice on the streeet about 20 times. The other times weren't as fun. All it made me do was want to get more fucked up. There's something about it that makes you high but frustrated and you give in to doing more drugs because you're high to begin with. Pills that you like—with me it's Codeine—become more fun and relaxing on juice. Even ones you hate are different. I can't stand Valiums—something I sold to asabole freebasers—but taking them on juice make it feel like there was a fog machine in my brain. Every time I did juice I shot

"Knowing that I could buy juice didn't stop me from using dope. I did another speedball and almost died. I did too much coke and went into a seizure. I couldn't hear or see anything-the room looked

sworn my creepy super came in, looked at me and poked around my house while I thought I was dying. It went on for, like, 10 minutes. I had accidents before but

none this bad.

"Then I met my wife. The minute we met each other, I knew we were gonna get married. I didn't want to be a fuck-up married. I them t want to be a fuck-up anymore—it wasn't just my life I was playing with. Plus I didn't want to involve her in any of this shit. So I stopped everything. It sucked but it wasn't as bad as they make it out to be in the movies. I felt depressed, like I saw everything in gray. I couldn't really eat for days. My kidneys felt like there was ground glass in them. After it was over I felt better that I didn't prolong it with things like these bullshit self-cures. All these kick pills that people say to use like Darvons only drag it out more. You've got to face the pain and then it's over.

"Now that I'm not alone anymore,

things are different. The city's not an easy place when you're alone. Since I've been clean, people on the program really pies me off. Me and my wife don't make a lot and we're paying for these assholes out of our taxes. People on the program always seem to have money, they get high courtesy of the government, they get wel-

stamps and sell them to buy nickels coke. Once we were really broke and applied for food stamps. And you kn what? They didn't give them to us. way this city is is really fucked."

KICKING DRUGS?

COMMISSIONER LA PORTE told me 1 DSAS evaluated programs by retent "We have to retain. The longer the retion in treatment, the better outcome."

It was past 5 p.m. Everybody in office had already gone home. The c missioner looked tired. I didn't have heart to ask him how this squared ! the goal of reintroducing addicts into ciety. So I asked if there were any a natives to methodone. His answer n some people on the program sound comfortably like guinea pigs.
"We tried LAM—Long Acting Me

done. People only had to come to clinic three times a week and there to take-homes. It doesn't work. Pe need that contact with the clinic. though they complain about the cl many patients-particularly the m problem ones—that's their total act for the day. That's where they see their friends. That's the main ever

"You've got to understand the path gy of these people. We did research I ing at dosages. We had a group of pe who would say, 'The methadone is holding me.' We would say, 'We're g to raise your dosage' and not rais We'd tell the others 'I'm sorry, you're going to get any more, but raise it. been raised double his dose. The guy told you were raising it only complain told you were raising it only companies tittle bit. If you raised it the se time—which we didn't but we told we did—he would be happy."

DSAS has researched some methan

alternatives. As of May 1983, it was perimenting with Buprenorphine, a thetic painkiller. Buprenorphine was found to be the base of the much p cized "designer" heroin that causes kinson's syndrome.

Clonidine was another possibilit hypertension drug, it soothes withdi symptoms by lowering blood pres But although Clonidine is nonaddi it causes lethargy and dizziness. It b narcotics, alcohol, and sedatives. E can block its effects. Clonidine is so 125th Street under its brand name tapres, as a cheap kick-pill.

Naltrezone is a nonaddictive drug blocks all narcotics yet doesn't pri any high. Although it's been teste several thousand people with app safety, there's a basic problem—p don't seem to like it or want to stay It doesn't produce any high.

Methadone is not rehabilitation. the state's way of keeping tabs on ju by providing them with a legalized high more debilitating than heroin state would just as soon give all jun life sentence in this chemical jai many pathetic people like Ciro have created by the program, it would be man to deprive them of it. But n done is clearly not the solution to ! addiction.

About a quarter of a million peo this city continue to use heroin rega of methadone's availability. A bett ternative might be modeled on Eng system, where junkies are allowed scriptions for government-regulate oin and works are sold in pharm The reduction in crime, AIDS trai sion, and overdoses would be imme

For society to arrest a junkie fo session of dope or works and then methadone as an alternative solves ing. The decision to stop doing dru always remain an individual one.

All the characters in this piece as not composites. Their names and a identifying details have been ch Thanks to Michelle Clifford for he in putting this together. Special the Herbert Hunks, who is far from of

Memo From A Child To: Parents

1. Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all I ask for - I'm only testing you. 2. Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it, it makes me feel

3. Don't let me form bad habits. I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages

4. Don't make me feel smaller than I am. It only makes me behave stupidly "big".

5. Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it.

- I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.
- 6. Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. It upsets my sense of
- 7. Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn the painful way 8. Don't be too upset when I say "I hate you". Sometimes it isn't you I
- hase but your power to thwart me. 9. Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. Sometimes they get me the attention I need.
- 10. Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.

Don't forget that I cannot explain myself as well as I should like,
 That is why I am not always accurate.

- 12. Don't put me off when I ask questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere. 13. Don't be inconsistent. That completely confuses me and makes me
- lose faith in you. 14. Don't tell me my fears are silly. They are terribly real and you can do
- much to reassure me if you try to understand. Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too great a shock when I discover that you are neither.
- Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm towards you.
- 17. Don't forget I love experimenting. I couldn't get along without it, so please put up with it.
- 18. Don't forget how quickly I am growing up. It must be very difficult for you to keep pace with me, but please do try.
- 19. Don't forget that I don't thrive without lots of love and understanding, but I don't need to tell you, do I?
- 20. Please keep yourself fit and healthy. I need you.

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P.S. The writer of the message above is unfortunately unknown to me for credit. I found it cut out of wherever it had appeared many years ago. My children are grown up now and unfortunately I have been guilty of some of the requests in this message. I believe in this advice. More than I hope that you'll join the New York Health & Racquet Club. I hope you'll cut this out for when your children are growing up.

> Fred Manocherian Founder, NYHRC

POINT OF RETURN Bill Landis

Walking down Avenue C toward the needle exchange run by the Lower East Side AIDS Strategy Group every Wednesday and Saturday between 11 A.M. and 2 P.M., I flashed on an ugly memory from 1984's Operation Pressure Point. Me and a black streetwalker had been picked up for

copping. We were handcuffed in the back of an unmarked police car which was speeding uncontrollably after its next mark—a lone junkie who managed to avoid getting busted by tearing into a tenement. I was frightened. I wished I'd run too.

There is something about this area that strikes a palpable fear if you've ever messed with hard narcotics. You're doing something wrong and everybody knows it. All eyes are on you. Your mere presence pisses

everyone off, even the dealer taking your money.

AIDS activists have been there, never once apologizing for people's personality traits. Faced with death, people who've had trouble confronting what they're about, be it queers or needle freaks, were given the choice of accepting themselves as human beings or dying silently by themselves.

Prior to the needle program, the works buy was obligatory for junkies who could afford it. The works salesman is the Ratso Rizzo of the drug trade, oblivious to whom he or she hurts for \$3. Oft-times enraged but cautious junkies have to discard used sets complete with blood marks.

Needle exchange eliminates these risks. All ethnicities turned up the day I was there: white- and blue-collar workers, stone Jersey junkies, cabbies, guys on bikes, homeless people. The bond of masochism and junkie self-loathing cuts through every stratum of society. But the activists treated no one condescendingly. The overwhelming feeling was love, for one another and for the people they were reaching out to.

People received a diabetic set for each one they returned. A client with none was given two. Old sets were dropped into plastic containers. Bleach, water, alcohol swabs, cookers, and condoms were distributed in Ziploc bags. And though most clients were hardcore junkies who cannot handle the vile psychodrama a trip to welfare lays on the needy, the activists offered bilingual health referral cards and contact with social

workers. A most demanding Freewheelin' Franklin with an old suit jacket covering multiple tracks and abscesses screamed for a dozen sets even though he had none to return. "THE POINT IS PREVENTION? ISN'T IT? ISN'T П?" But there was also a young Latino couple with two babies in strollers. Most people were cool and grateful to get, every face stamped with that look of anxiety and shame. Inevitably, works salesmen showed up, too, returning dozens of sets. At least they'd have clean goods to sell. Like can collectors, they're now motivated to return needles found on the street and in playgrounds, eliminating another hazard.

Until a few weeks ago, when the program's needles became exempt from the drug laws, the cops hassled the program repeatedly, and even today relations with the police seem uneasy. But despite some warnings to restrict their activities to Avenue C, volunteers began canvassing the neighborhood at around 11:30. As they started toward East Broadway, a bunch of young Latino guys who looked like good-natured Saturday-afternoon beer drinkers politely asked for supplies.

The contingent continued to a needle park. It's dominated by Meth-

adonian needle freaks from a nearby clinic—in the age of AIDS, shooting up isn't enough to get you kicked off a program. These nickel-and-dime pagans did it all—their Meth, pills, dope, shitty nickels of coke. Their affiliation with the welfare system made them better off financially than the average street junkie, with a state dole, health care, and counseling if they're in the mood, and the more coherent and better dressed of them returned enormous numbers of used needles. A white dude who had been HIV-positive since '86 spoke of multiple operations for pancreatic abscesses. An innocuous little old man, a former Talmudic student, said he has been HIV-positive since '83. A streetwalker in a coke spasm splayed her new condoms all over the sidewalk.

Nearby was the Manhattan Bridge, under which live the people of Shantytown. Men and women had constructed living spaces of discarded planks. Remnants provided wall to wall carpeting. Generators had been obtained. Nothing was wasted. Like any family, they tipped off some activists not to wear jewelry so that a dope-sick brother or sister wouldn't get an itch and do something wrong. Totally outside the welfare system, some with jobs, they were steadfast about their responsibilities. Every dirty needle was religiously returned, all instructions were followed, and everyone was grateful to receive bleach, water, swabs, cookers—things

that the squatter's life wouldn't normally allow.

A white hooker came out with her works practically in her arm, so earnest was her desire not to pass anything along. A genteel if very stoned black dude was giving back his booty for the last week—30 works. While he dumped them in the bucket, one fell on an activist's bare foot encased in a sandal. A beat passed. "The point on that's gone," he screamed. He was more terrified than her. "Take it easy, just be more careful," she gently but firmly told him, and reassured him that he was getting a boxful of sets.

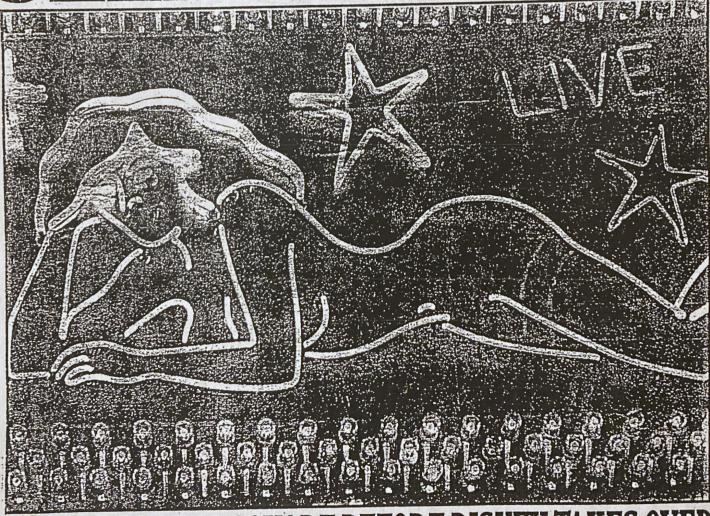
If David Dinkins wants to see a New York mosaic, he should check out the needle exchange. This is the least racist subculture in the city—there are so many fucking things to fight about that the color of the skin is the least concern. Everyone has a right to live, including junkies.

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Musto Goes Blind p8
My Life as a Media Slut Savan p41

BAILE of AZZ the FESTS
Giddins, Friedwald,
Ratliff & Williams p57

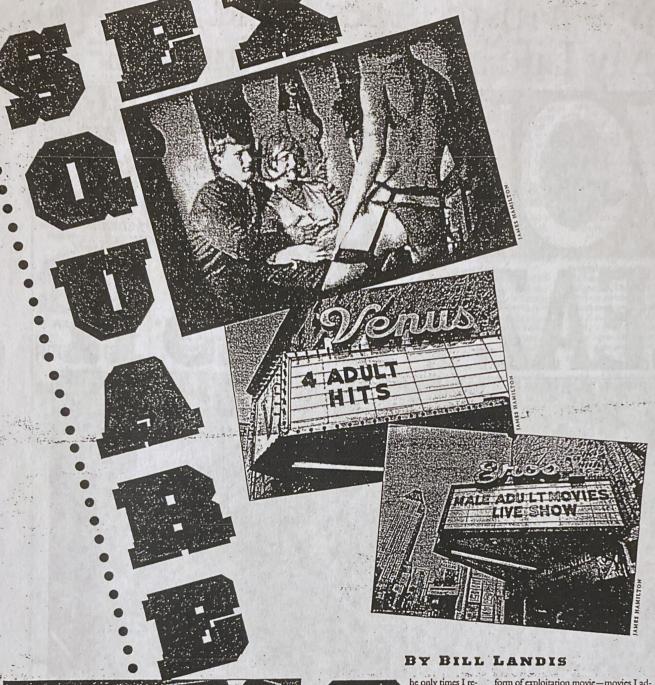
SIEAZYDOES II



SAVORING TIMES SQUARE BEFORE DISNEY TAKES OVER

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QUARE TIMES SQUARE

IMES SUVARE TOMES SUVARE 1997

he only times I remember seeing my father happy was when he'd guzzle a half case of Budweiser and recall with a wolfen glee his days on Shore Patrol in Times Square hunting AWOL sailors. Long after he had retired from the military, he would make pilgrimages to his last detail under the pretext of a family outing to a Broadway show. His eyes rolling like pinballs at men in cowboy outfits, female streetwalkers, the lobbies of adult theaters, he'd rant at me for peering at the poster for Deep Throat. So naturally, as soon as I was able to fake an ID I went back

ouths, female streetwalkers, the lobbles of adult theaters, he'd rant at me for peering at the poster for *Deep Throat*. So naturally, as soon as I was able to fake an ID I went back. I spent most of my years at NYU skipping business classes to catch movies on the Deuce. My father wasn't afraid of it, so why should I be? The Deuce was nothing but a big carny funhouse where I could see any

form of exploitation movie—movies I admired as a film buff for their stylistic extravagances and shock value.

In the fall of 1982, having concluded that the militaristic mind-set of the corporate world was not to my taste, I answered a running Voice ad that runned out to be for the all-male Night Shift Theater on the corner of 47th Street and Eighth Avenue. Its two enormous floors were accessible via a creepy elevator off the street. Having quickly passed the projectionist's test, which involved a quick splice of 16mm prints gone ragged with age, I was hired to change reels on the midnight shift in an outhouselike wooden projection booth eye level with the audience. The Night Shift was an orgy in the psycho house. Patrons were treated to such amenities as a "Central Park Ramble," a room filled with a row of tiny fake trees; a faux subway car called "The IR Troom"; and a filthy, unused pool table surrounded by



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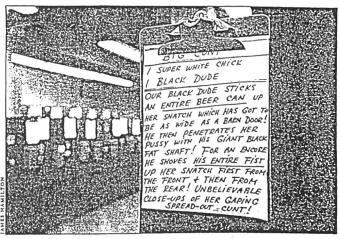
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bunk beds. The audience included homeless men using the theater as a flophouse, assaultprone pickpockets who slashed trousers with dull razors, carelessly bloodying a mark's ass in the process; thrill-seeking tourists; and a few stage and screen notables.

The staff included a gaggle of out-ofdrag transvestites and their rough trade transient hustler "husbands." They'd use the lobby as a demented living room where any of their acquaintances could drop by, creating a skewed version of a family structure. Sexually transmitted diseases weren't of the highest priority to the staff or patrons, those staunch sexual outlaws of Times Square. Most had heard of GRID or "the gay cancer," and the general denial was that it was untransmittable. What I most appreciated about the Night Shift was the freedom. I could go to work wearing anything. Pot, acid, or Quaaludes weren't a problem as long as I could change reels or take tickets. I could

stand at the counter and catch the local color, or drop out of sight in the projection booth.

My employment at the Night Shift expired after a three month stay, the limit for any remotely sane individual. Two thugs mugged me in the elevator area, relieving me of \$7 and a hamburger. Filled with righteous indignation, I had the two goons arrested as they were greedily consuming the stolen food a block away. I was freaked by the realization that if the wrong situation occurred you could get snuffed out in a second working in Times Square. But it was a good job credit, and soon the projectionists' grapevine led me to the Avon Theaters chain in December 1982. Stella, the office manager and bookkeeper, an older lesbian who looked like a grizzled Shelley Winters, hired me as a projectionist, cashier, and theater manager for their remaining adult houses: the Bryant, a big old grindhouse smack in the middle of 42nd Street between Sixth Avenue and

DOGS AND PONIES

like husband and wife," I hear a streetcorner evangelist yell on my way to the Calety, an establishment that celebrates the male nude through video and dance, to put It mildly. While most guys are home Ironing their Daisy Dukes for Pride
Weekend, I'm having a private anticelebration Cay Shame Weekend, I callit: After a months-long sequence of nowyou-like-me-now-you-don't pseudorelationships, attending a parade for my sexual orientation, politics aside, would make me feel like a straight woman going to a Male Pride rally, Bravo, Cod, I think, in reply to the preacher, because it

ain'thappening here any time soon.
It turns out I'm in exactly the right rueful frame of mind for the Calety. I bravely saunter up the carpeted stairs past the orange-vested construction crewoutside. only to discover I've arrived before opening time. Can I have a side of embarrassment to gowith that shame? An hour later I return and present the poorty preserved doorwoman my dollar discount ad clipped from the Volce—you know, the one that sports a picture of a guy so overphotocopled that he looks like Jason from Friday the 13th.

Inside, the ultrahot Troy Daniels is worlding his Caesar cut and mouthwatering physique. Framed by Unsel curtains, he gyrates down the runway, flexing, flashing some glans. The format hasn't changed since my last visit, as a college freshman. Performers emerge clothed, dance (or approximate dancing) for a few minutes, then exit to tennis-clapping After a few moments, they reappear nude (maybe with shoes), turgld penises standing out, offer as many views as possible, and really rich. I know a guy who got about fall to maintain their erections while the \$80,000 worth of stuff off some old guy midatternoon crowd, most of whom

look like retirees in their sixtles or renties, dressed in drab-colored short sleeved shirts and antiquated bifocals, lean back, hands curied below their chins, and stare intently, registering their approval only by their mild applause.

This is a dog show of desire, where oroughbreds thoroughbreds groomed for maximum cliched pornstar arousal tantalize Immaculately shaven and even more ripped than most muscle-hungry Chelsectors, These boys look like they can't even oll a bloycle chain for fear of fat. As one preens to a disco version of the Police's "Hessage in a Battle"—"A hundred billion castaways/Looking for a home"—I see a pathetic vision of myself in the future, should I live so long, and it gives me a lump in my throat instead of my pants. Lonely and undestrable, L too, vil covet the youth of some statues que Adonis and attempt to solicit him in a former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former backgroom-turned-former background former background for the former background Calety's, adorned with framed pictures from Madonna's Sex, featuring Miss Thing and Udo Kier in the compromising positions with Calety guys that stamped the venue with Glocone fame. I that up one of the dancers, a lunky young god with a face like an injured cherub, who twists the knile by informing me that 99 per cent of his peers are straight and that when he takes a John back to his hotel, he watches TY while the trick gets off. I'm ashamed that gay senior citizens would pay for such a privilege. I'm ashamed that young gay people treat their elders with fear and loathing. I'm ashame that I want to ask the hustler how much he charges. The money isn't even so good," he says, "unless you hook up with someone \$80,000 worth of stuff off some old guy. Bravo, Cod. JAMES HANNAHAH

PANTASY BITES

I am one among the hordes gathered parametris the Ukthecter off Times Square. Stucked between the Jug shops, the underage to be parametris the abdominal ripples of the Jug shops. The underage in Depailbook and the abdominal ripples of the Jug shops. The shops in the form of a anticipation for an escape in the form of a suitipation for an escape in the form of from under a natie-high billbook off the produces a natie-high billbook of the Jug shops in the Jug sho

Every where I look. The reminded that loe!
Schumacher con't possibly bring me the
definitive fantasy. Standing at the center of content york's commercial universe. The
already there.
But I give it a go. Buy my ticket, enter the

But I give it a go. Buy my ticket, enter the theoter, and settle into my sect. I'm all settle into of the screen and yells. Twhere is the Bat Man. Then, like a flash, out of the Bat Man. Then, like a flash, out of the Bat Man. Then, like a flash, out of the Bat Man. The language into the decrease of the language into the language into my section. The language is the Bat Man. The language is the Bat Man. The language is the language into any section of the language into my section of the language into my section. The language is the language into my section of the language into my section. The language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section. The language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language in the language is the language into my section in the language is the language in the

with a Glad bag cape that probably couldn't deflect acid rain, let alone 9mm bullets. He gets a lew chuckles, and before you can say "Holy Cynicism!" the back ray demands that our friend "get a real job. A moviegoer up front decides that it is time to lover his suspension of disbellets: threshold. He flicks his Zippo and lights a splift, now truly ready to take a ride into No.

spliff, now truly ready to take a ride into
Cotham.
The spectacle begins and we yeer and
silde through a neon Chinatown, an extraordinary Ritz Cotham, a compute Carrey's hyperbolic Nygma gets the biggest rise out of us. Dr. Meridian's aggressive freakiness pales in 12 comparison to that of the girls outside. We get a Nygmatic glimpse into Bruce Way repressed psyche, and someone wor aloud why, with a billion-dollar budget, they couldn't get a real bat? Before Bruce has fully thanked Hiss Chase for "giving him a new dream," most of the audience is on its feet looking for the least congested exit. It has been an understandably tough crowd. Outside Batman Impersonator sidles up to the girly foursome, who are still standing tall. C messages snake around the walls of the Newsday building, giving me snippets of the true scoop: "Hee-Haw off the air after 24." years running...... Ah, reality. Escapism realized. Hission accomplished.

—VALERIE BURCHER

Broadway; and the Doll and the Avon 7, two shoeboxes on the corner of 48th Street and Seventh Avenue. A sex industry pioneer since the 1960s, Avon had introduced gay softcore and hardcore movies, hardcore mixed combodificatures that focused on straight interracial fucking, and threadbare but convincingly brutal seem epics. In its 1970s heyday, Avon owned about 10 adult theaters. It was the most imposing sex industry family in Times Square, and I was glad to be part of it.

Avon's most splashy innovation was the live sex show, a 20-minute interlude of fucking between every hour and a half of onscreen pomography. At the Bryant I quickly learned the routine. Flipping off the projector, I'd point a spodlight on the stage and turn on a tape. "Juicy Fruit," "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now," or "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough" would bellow out of the loudspeakers. The uddience would grow spellbound as a woman did a quick strip and gyrated spreadlegged on a mattress stained with bodily fluids. Her parmer would then join her and they'd fuck in a myriad of positions. The show generally ended in a visible come shot. Couples were paid \$20 per performance. The usual day was seven shows, but a few worked a 14-show double shift.

In the Avon family scheme, Stella played den mother and the live sex show teams were the metaphoric children. The teams' endless bickering would occasionally result in brawls that sent the combatants spilling nude onto the Deuce. Except for those with porn-movie ambitions, teams generally refused to be photographed. Many of the guys were black Vietnam war vetterans. One Latino fellow, Carlos, was a true case of satyriasis and exhibitionism, able to perform 14 orgasmic shows a day, not counting his numerous personal encounters. Many of the live show couples had serious drug problems, sometimes heroin or methadone, but mostly freebase cocaine.

The most frightening and notorious individual to rise out of live shows was Phil Prince. A huge Irish American from the Broux, Phil was famed for his daredevil bull'scye come shots into the audience, once beaning an unlucky old geezer in the third row square in the forehead. What made him believably chilling was the myth of the death of his first wife and live-show costar, which Avon employees would refer to in hushed, paranoid tones. Together with some of her visiting female friends, she had been slaughtered in a bloodbath. People spoke of blood on the ceiling, bodies mutilated beyond recognition. Phil called 911 to report that he had arrived home and discovered the camage.

Although detectives showed up at the Bryant to interview Phil, he was eventually exonerated. But that didn't stop the gossip. Whatever the explanation, the blood had been let and was left to run its course. Anyone who's had to see a real bloodletting knows how hard it is to crase the image but how easy it is to reproduce. It comes out just like piss. Phil became the auteur of Avon's in-house hardcore pom movies, directing no-budget s&m psychodramas using the basics: close-up of face vomiting verbal abuse, closeup of genitals. Such films as The Taming of Rebecta, Forgive Me I Have Sinned, and Kneel Before Me depicted rapist behavior and included piercings, water sports, spitting at orifices, assaultive anal sex, and heterosexual fistings. As crotic as amateur surgery, the films were a turnoff to any sensible sadomasochist, but possessed a cuphoric shock value for audiences fixated on serious force, drawing ticket buyers like chickens to com.

Although he was always high and had a short fuse, Phil did lighten up when discussing exploitation movies. He considered himself on a par with Z-movie horror directors. Avon Theaters had also provided Phil with his adored father figure: cashier-projectionist Pat Rogers. Pat was everything society despised rolled into one 80-pound human skeleton: longterm methadone addict, coke shooter, alcoholic, tuberculosis carrier, babbling OTB philosopher, all-around dirty old man. He told me the first time he met me that he was straight but liked to experiment and what was I doing after work. Although he was only in his late forties, he looked well into his seventies, and despite his sickly appearance had committed sudden violent crimes such as armed robbery, landing in stir many times. Phil had moved Pat into his Staten Island home with his second wife and their two small children, where Phil and Pat were obviously a very happy pair. There were many humorous rumors about how this longtime Deuce duo had first hooked up.

After I'd worked two months at the



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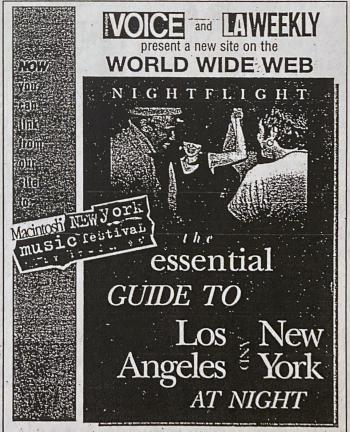
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HEY BUDDY

In the Male Box, past the walls of porn videas, past the shelves of sex toys and accessories, three signs above a not-sonarrow doorway lead into a darkened notso-deep corridor: The one in the middle tells everyone NO SHOKING, the bottom one, "no refunds," dangles right above the guy sitting on a stool who's dispensing tokens. The one on top reads, in cheap, assembled letter-stickers, BUDDY

BOOTHS. mostly businessmen with briefcases, stand ground in the corridor. The booths line each wall like men's room stalls. Their hideous orange and yellow doors don't really brighten up the space; like the missile reds and submarine blues that catch your eye in a video arcade, they just filcker in the darkness. Above each door is a red light that goes off when tokens are you want to raise the shutter and view the inserted. The token-giver watches for when is patrons on either side, it's only a button's 3. more tokens? A man walks out of one, tugging on his zipper like he's just taken a vo ples. But he's really readjusting a dying hard-on-or concealing a growing one. He walks like a peg-legged plrate out the door, after playing hooky during his lunch break

At the end of the corridor, a display case flashes 32 video boxes, a sort of Prevue Culde for what's playing on the monitors in each booth. Titles like Beefeaters, Latin Pursuit and Lukas' Story (hey, this one features that oh-so-tasty posterboy for 550-BODS) offer the whole spectrum of preference, type, and fetish. Right below, a . Janitor's mop and pall-on-wheels is stashed In a corner next to a Hetty-lined garbage can: A staffperson bends over the garbage can to clear his nostrils of what sounds like a full weekend's snot. No one really takes notice. Considering what the mop and pall are here for, repulsive is a relative term in this place:

As you approach the booths, another sign comes into view: ONLY ONE PERSON IN A BOOTH AT A TIME. A handsome suit and a young blond with his hat to the back keep staring at each other while simultaneously eyeing the token giver. Cuess they're walting for him to get distracted so they can break this rule. No luck though. They not two adjacent booths.

the back of the door: "Just because someone tells you they re HIV-doesn't mean they are . . . always use a condom Several tokens, which bear the message "Have You Hugged Your Pussy Today" drop In the slot. The lights blink off. The monitor flashes a grainy image of two men fucking, one's got his toes pointing toward Jesus. Lighted buttons on the side walls light up; if these lights goding Then he'll yell, "Number push away. (Ever pressed a button to see an executive Jerking off while his slocks are at his ankles Tyou can At the bottom of the shutter window, there's a slit big enough to pass your buddy more tokens if he runs out, but more often hard, fleshy members are gripping the handle of his briefcase at his crammed between these gaping cracks. windows, some Windex should be sitting next to that mop and pall.

For every token, there is roughly one minute, and a minute never passes faster than when in these booths. It's like being a child in a video arcade: the tokens run out too fast and the game's always over before you've finished your business. No constant sound of electonic gunfire or space explosions, only the peaceful melodies of adult-contemporary radio and a constant chorus of pornographic moans and signs. A throaty grunt rings through the corridor. This one is less generic, more organic enough to make you think that suit and that blond finally made it into the same booth. SMITH CALTNEY

Bryant, Stella promoted me to day manager of the Doll. Two easygoing guys, both 15-year vets of the adult theater circuit—Steve (not his real name), a gentle white guy who was the token union projectionist, and Benny, the Latino floor man-became my coworkers and pals. The corner of 48th and Seventh was a virtual little Hollywood for a pornographic movie industry spurred by the VCR boom. Producers, directors, and performers floated by throughout the day. The Doll felt really cozy. Times Square became a huge play-

school village to me. I couldn't walk five steps without running into a friend, coworker, dealer, or potential sex partner, although most of these propositions weren't ones I wanted to pursue. During the spring and summer of 1983, I met my two most cherished father figures, two middle-aged guys who gave me pragmatic advice about survival in the concrete jungle: Willie -

George Payne.
Willie — was a dapper black dude in a
Kangol cap who worked upstairs from the Doll at Avon's "taxi-dance" joint, the Satin Ballroom, where tourists got dry hustled by old hookers. Willie wielded his position with a finesse rarely seen, and spun a half dozen other money-making dishes in areas so gray that he'd discuss them only in the third person. A well-liked guy, he was always generous to anyone in need. He always had a good-looking lady, and was known in the area for his ourrageous sexual escapades. Despite these tenderloin bacchanals, there wasn't a day that went by without Willie thinking of the wife and daughter he left in Brooklyn. He loved them, but couldn't take the pressure of a 9 to 5 grind as a baker, with bills piling up and the IRS attaching his paycheck. My other father figure, George Payne,

was one of pornography's most durable

icons. He had been in loops since the late 1960s. Like the protagonist of Alexandro Jodorowsky's El Topo, George perpetually transformed his looks and onscreen image, shuffling personas like tarot cards. At this time he was the only guy who could handle the stress of playing the lead heavy in each of Phil Prince's films. A far more meticulous actor than the porn personalities who claimed legitimate training, George utilized an Oz effect in his Prince-directed roles, portraying a menacing lunatic through a mixture of contorted facials, manic speech, and simulated emotional paroxysms, completely convincing the audience. But it was all an act. Undemeath George's granite exterior was a guy with a lot of heart, the same kid who had run away from a bad family situation some 30 years prior, and had seen too many horrible things on the way. Although I was always insecure about my looks, George taught me I had a boyish appeal for which I could curact a price in certain live or photographic situa-tions. He taught me to fight with my dick rather than my knuckles.

Both George and Willie seemed indestructible, looking and acting much younger than guys of their years, living day to day, but succeeding. They were prototypical inhabi-tants of Times Square, which provided an arena for the id to act out otherwise unacceptable behavior. George and Willie showed me how the entire situation was analogous to a chess game where, if you made the correct move, you went to the next position of power. Witty, insightful analysts of human nature, George and Willie commanded a wealth of folk psychology backed by first-hand experiences. Both men were functioning Darwinists.

Avon slowly began to dose its theaters. At lot of us took raps for permitting prostitution and public lewdness that were only



leared after many court appearances. The some video boom was starting to cut into heatrical porn. Redevelopment began chewng away at Avon's turf. And Avon's star diector, Phil Prince, was missing in action. In une 1984, he resurfaced, sticking up a recenwich Village Häagen-Dazs with his id-ot sidekick Pat Rogers. The store owner was hot in the chest, and both Pat and Phil were uled. Avon had become too out of control to c around anymore, but I was too enmeshed

1 Times Square to pull out.
Through most of 1985 I pulled my last
ant as a Times Square sex industry worker
t Chelly Wilson's Greek-named Eighth Avnue theaters. Mrs. Wilson had emigrated nany years before from Greece and was one f New York City's original pornography ragnates, a producer, distributor, and exibitor since the softcore 1960s. An elderly oman, she lived in a gaudy Roma Furniire-decorated apartment above the Eros heater on 46th Street and Eighth Avenue ith her two ladyfriends. Ensconced in her

apartment were monitors video trained on the theater's cashbox and lobby.

At lunch hour the Ems drew married closet queens wearing wedding rings who'd turn up enjoy the dancers. male strip routines were performed to "Everything She Wants," that ultimate hustler lament, and the Sisters' Pointer Jump" for the dickwagging finale. The show was so tired, each one the same as the last, that I'd generally take refuge from the projection booth to smoke joints in the cashbox with Frankie, who had been one of the drag queens in Last to Brooklyn. The dancers were

mostly minority
hustlers who got paid \$75 per week and any
trick money they could scrounge. Since closing time was 5 a.m., the Eros drew both unwary foreign tourists and violent psychopaths after sunset. I saw my life flash before me many times around closing.

The Venus, next door to the Eros, showed triple bills of old straight porn. It was bigger than the Eros, complete with a balcony and a projection room that resembled a ship's porthole. However, the Venus had predominantly guy/guy activity in the audience, as well as explosions of mental illness. The patrons included "the mad shitter," a fat black guy in a M*A*S*H T-shirt and Cokebottle glasses who'd defecate in the balcony. Most memorably, there was the Latino dusthead who ripped his clothes off in the lobby, screaming "IT'S ORGY TIME," requiring the intervention of an EMS truck. He returned to the theater the following night as if nothing had happened. Since it was open from 10 a.m. to 7 a.m., the Venus also drew many homeless sleepers.

TABLE TALK

iesus Man is using a megaphone on Broadway half a block south of A2nd Street. a the Book Lady, a black woman with cornrows who ministers a few dozen s to the porth. Debra makes no claim niscience_1 know where everyone rorics," she says, pointing out a familiar couple while standing next to her table of eared tomes, but not those two. They alk to me about other things." ara, a blond Sandra Bullock alding a case book, stops to give an

pdate on her law school night classes lown the street. The professor is good, work not bad, and she doesn't nind getting out at 10. Debra leans forward a her summer Birkenstocks, away from the lpper's midday spool, and fixes a walnutyed Popeye glare on her visitor, "Tamara,

in that too late for you to come
ut here?
A busybody "says red-haired Robert, a
intercyclist and her good friend. Like a sany of her afternoon yishtors, he rarely uys a book 7 by report cards always said, failin loo much in class, "Debra says, sating her head," She does more her recycled library sale

her head ones move her recycled library sale ostly to PATH-bound women: Dixle

Browning's Ships in the Night, Sally 1972 Heywood's Impossible to Forget, Cowboys but the multitudes seem to have found only 3. Don't Cry from the Han of the Honth series The boyfriend of a Times editor buys Debra's science fiction; when the plainclothes aren't around, she also sells Jewelry, though not to the Times editor. Some months this pays the rent 200 In Flatbush.

She's there every day of the week, as she has been for five years, as she will be until the police decide to enforce the Disney-deal? regulations that went into effect July I. She doesn't care to return to the employ of the police department or the Brooklyn Academy of Music ("It was the year they put on The Mahabharata. I met Peter Brook.") and she hopes the familiarity of her face will get her a job with some of Times Square's new tenants. That way she can still catch up with her old regulars. Like the woman who, seeing Debra's red-raw eyes the day after her father passed, pulled out a sawbuck and told her to go get a ticket to the funeral down South. And her man in London: "He's an artist who comes in every six months. He told his friend on the 30th floor here that he hed to go downstairs and see his girl. He'll, cled-librury sale be back in October "Odds are Debra band and women: Dixle be be be he harm he harm he had be he harm he harm he had be he harm he had be he harm he had be he

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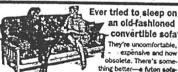
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AIDS grew omnipresent. People still performed dangerous sex acrs in the theaters ven though management had posted NO SEX ALLOWED signs so health inspectors wouldn't close them like the bathhouses. Like a festering wound, the crack scene that originated out of 39th Street and Ninth Avenue began to claim victims throughout Times Squire, creating an army of nighttime zombies willing to rob or perform any sex act for \$5 or less. I felt lonely and suicidal. I never got into crack, but all the pain, suffering, and senseless violence surrounding me led me to the self-medicating cure that so many before me had utilized: regular injections of heroin and cocaine. But I always held on, remembering George's and Willie's encouragement to keep making it through another day no matter what the odds.

The long arm of the Republican-controlled United States government struck out at the sex business in the form of the Meese Commission. Phil Prince's movies were portrayed as the foulest examples of pornography. It was inferred that they were semidocumentary, as in a certain sense they were. Hence George Payne's sadist impersonation was held responsible for the violent activity, placing him in a position analogous to Betty Page during the 1950s Kefauver hearings. Between AIDS and the government attention, George had been trying to extricate himself from this scene. He wanted to settle down with a mature woman and paired off with a former assistant to some of New York's leading pornographers. She then distanced George from any manual labor sex work, and promoted him to management.

I also wanted to split this scene toward the end of 1985, but lingered in its remnants until early 1986. I hadn't met any women around the Deuce who were worth more than a couple of encounters. After writing about Times Square for the Voice and Film Comment, I began corresponding with and talking to Michelle Clifford, who was from Florida and had read my articles. We decided to move in together before we had even met face to face, and as we got off the bus from Newark Airport at the Port Authority, she got her first look at New York City, which was Times Square itself. The setting of so many experiences I'd described to her, she found it a microscopic toy town. Later that evening, we went on our first official date: a double bill at a Deuce grindhouse of Mountaintop Massacre and Women for Sale, and had our first photos taken together at Playland.

Michelle and I have been happily married for nine years. George Payne has remained married for a decade. Willie movedout of the Times Square hotel he had lived in for years, now stays mostly uptown, and continues to be successfully self-employed. He remains a generous guy and has cared for several friends who are HIV-positive. Tragically, some of our friends and associates have succumbed to AIDS.

It breaks my heart to see a place I grew up in, like the Bryant Theater, as a razed lot, or the Doll, as a Smiler's Deli. Michelle and I both sadly witnessed the closing of Playland last year. The remaining old grindhouses lie collecting dust. Phil Prince was released after serving three years in jail for the ice cream shooting and robbery. Early in the 1990s he made some putrid anal sex videos. Phil left such a stench that none of his old associates in or out of the sex industry wants to admit knowing exactly where he is. The predominant hope is that Phil has been put out of business. A couple of my old pals still work what remains of the circuit. One fellow recently told me I was fortunate to get married and split when I did. But he's still



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There are online pharmacles—known in Net parlance as "ops"—that FedEx their promise from a garage pharmacy to your door Lately, these setups have attracted sensationalistic media attention charging quackery or just lowdown dirty drug dealing. Self.
where ads revolve around fitness and vitamins, revived the old wheeze "a fool is his
own physician." Message boards are full of rumors about stories on Dateline and 60 Min-utes in the works. In reality, however, ops serve the needs of Americans who don't have health insurance, can't afford regular doctor visits, live in remote areas, or need to evade

American life. Many have children. Not the types to buy drugs illegally with the associated thrills and spills. More likely their insurance doesn't cover painful conditions like fibromyalgia, or surgery has left them with com-plications, or they don't want a psychiatric paper trail regarding their use of tranquilizers or antidepressants, or they have absorbed pain-killers into their metabolisms and have no intention of giving them up. Op customers know what medicines they react well to. They have en prescribed them in the past. They canbeen prescribed them in the past. They cannot afford the money and aggravation of having a doctor refuse them meds they feel comfortable and functional on. The head of a leading op told me anonymously. We're dealing with an upper socioeconomic bracket. Less than 1 percent of the patients we call are incoherent, can't spell their own name or repeat their phone number. I see the doctor have to briefly compose himself after these calls, but they are few and far between."

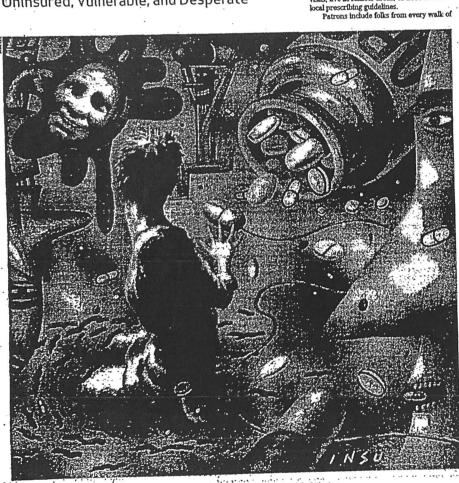
On blurthy titled message boards like find-

On bluntly titled message boards like find-On bluttly titled message pourts has incomed come and drugbuyers com, you can find businessmen, artists, stewardesses, housewives. J.R., who lives in the Ozarks, has a bulging T-12 disk from an auto cracking but can't shell out \$800 for an MRI. Katte, a flight attendant who lost two friends on 9-11 and is terrified to go back to work, is suffering from andety disorder on top of fibromyalda. She was told by her chiropractor that she could buy pain medicine online. Dee, from suburban New York, once had a sympathetic doctor who was prescribing her 120 mg Percocet a month for her migraines, but then lost his ability to write narcotic Rx's. Madeline, a native New Yorker, can't get over 9-11 and has chronic back and leg pain that started with a subsenack and leg pain that states with a season quent apartment fire: "My whole world changed for the worse and with a deadly final-ity that day. It'll mark me forever. It was like being fucked in the ass with an elm tree. That

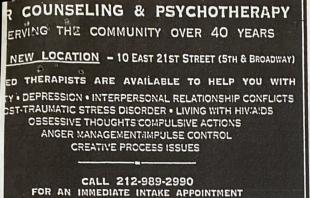
ing fucked in the ass with an elm tree. In a pein requires serious overage, If I didn't get it from the ops, it'd be a worse scene for me."

Financially, meetally, and spiritually, the nation is in a depression. Jobs are hard to find and few provide affordable health coverage. Medicald is only available to the zerodollar destitute and useful mainly for emer-

See LANDIS page 42



स्थ किर्णाकित क्षेत्री, रक्षि



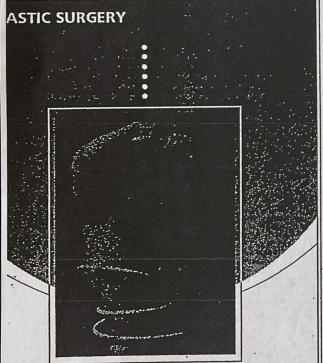


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reform the few doctors who accept Medicaid frequently refuse to write painkiller prescriptions. New York state requires a triplicate form. So getting prescriptions is difficult for many Americans.

A doctor may write for benzodiazepinesthe Valium family-once or twice before attempting to shuffle a patient off to a psychla-trist, and this after charging \$100 to \$250 per visit. Physical conditions that require narcotic analgesics come with the looming threat of the institution known as the pain clinic, the approximate inverse of that American gulag. the rehab. There you can be subjected to a battery of expensive tests, have your brain creepy-crawled by intrusive and dated psychological exams, receive useless treatments like biofeedback, and still not receive the medication you feel is right for you. Many pain clinics simply drain the patient's insurance money and waste their time. And even sympathetic doctors are in a tricky position, because they're required to report the Rx's they write to the DEA. If they write too many, they jeopardize their license.

Most reputable ops originate out of Florida, where offbeat businesses sprout like palm trees-tropicalix.com, erxonline.com, asamedsworldwide.com, norcoworldwide.com, and buymeds.com, the last now in limbo due to legal challenges. What people seek from ops is controlled-substance painkillers or tran-quilizers in the Schedule III-V categories—not Schedule II narcotics like OxyContin, morphine, or Dilaudid. The most popular pain-killer is the semisynthetic opioid hydrocodone compounded with acetaminophen, offered with anywhere from 325 to 750 mg of acetaminophen combined with 5, 7.5, or 10 mg of hydrocodone. Hydrocodone, originally invented as an antitussive, has dozen's of formulations and generics, including Vicodin, Vicodin ES, Vicodin HP, Lorcet 10, Lortab 10, and Norco 10. In addition to relieving pain, hydrocodone can cause euphoria in sufficient doses, providing an "awake" feeling like that of a heroin-cocaine speedball. It has a longer half-life than many painkillers and is highly addictive.

Ops also do a large trade in benzodiazepine tranquilizers such as Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin, and Valium, which can be difficult to obtain from a physician on a regular basis-2 mg "sticks" or diskettes of Xanax meet with special hostility from doctors. Other items for sale include muscle relaxants like Soma and Flexeril, potency or hair-loss remedies for the easily embarrassed, and antidepressants like Prozac and related SSRI medications. Pressed on doctors by drug salesmen who emphasize that they're not controlled substances, they are now shoved down patients' throats as a cureall for anything from low-grade depression to

post-traumatic stress.

Ops can function out of office suites or people's bedrooms. Two very visible and over-priced Florida ops, buymeds.com and tropi-calrx.com, shared the same e-malling list for potential customers. But customers got sick of Pharmanet, the garage pharmacy used by Buymeds. One never knew if the medicines had been sitting in the Miami sun, were old to begin with, or were exposed to heat in transit. With any op there are the usual e-commerce hassles—nondelivery, shorted quantities, credit card overbillings—but many of these seem to be solved quickly as with any other business.

Two of the better ops, norcoworldwide.com and asamedsworldwide.com, are located near each other in north-central Florida. After an online form listing physical complaints is filled out, a phone consultation is scheduled via email. This basically consists of a few questions, not as coldly put as might appear. What are you taking now? We offer those in 30, 60, and 90 quantity per month, which would you like? Do you know they're addictive? You're not getting them from anyone else, are you?" Click.

Lortab 10 and Xanax 2 mg are \$82 and \$77. respectively. With the consultation good for two refills, prescription prices, apart from the overnight shipping (\$28), are only slightly steeper than at many chain drugstores. 3

International ops (IOPs) present something of a legal risk, especially on quantities of three months or over, which the DEA can construe as enough for resale. Individuals who have ordered from IOPs have received what's known as a "love letter" from the DEA reporting that a package has been seized. If the recipient ignores it, likely nothing will happen. But challenge of the selzure notice sets the stage for legal repercussions from the DEA, and nobody wants that. Some IOPs are quite respectable and deliver slowly but surely, for instance www.pharma24.cc, located in Gibraltar. Under cold and cough remedies, Gibraltar features Perduretas Codeina retard 50 mg, which provides instant pain release when bitten into and chewed. Gibraltar also features one of Europe's most popular pain relievers. Contugesic 60, a time-released codeine derivative, dihydrocodeine. Invented around 1900 for upper respiratory infections and neuralgia, dihydrocodeine is described as a speedier version of codeine, and can offer up to 10 hours of pain relief.

The most officeat of the IOPs is a secretive individual in the United Kingdom known the Bloman, who makes no pretense of being a doctor or pharmacist. He goes so far as to iffer free samples of Peduretas Codetna, Span-Ish Ambien, Contugesic 60, Aldonto (Spanish time-release tramadol), and an array of antidepressants, actually fronting samples before payment. Then he sends 20 tablets, all in the original blister packs in a discreet enveloped if you like the 20, you send \$20 cash and hell send 40 more pills. He'll continue doing it in quantities of 60 for three months at a time. The Bloman knowingly never sends enough

pills to be construed as for resale.

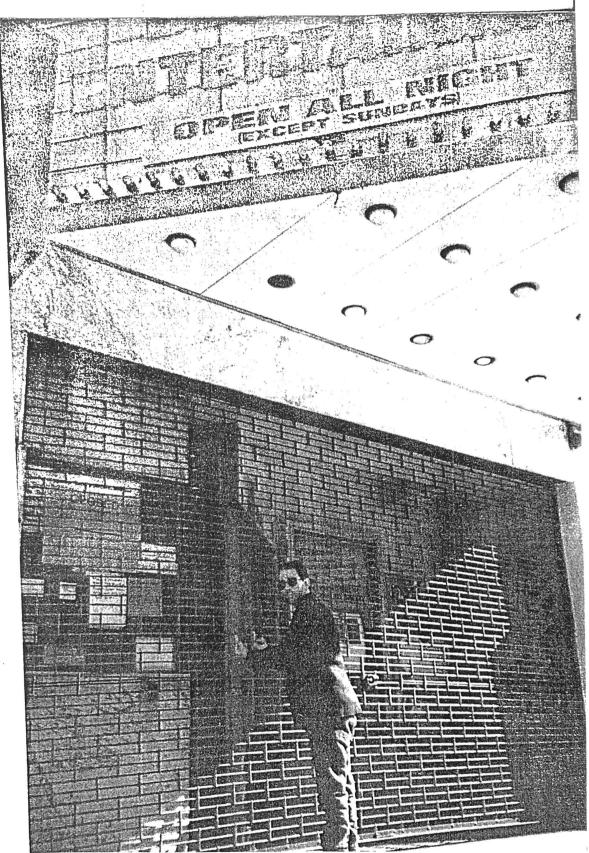
Surprisingly, there is less overprescribing with ops than with unscrupulous Dr. Feelgoods who give patients enormous prescriptions before either cutting them off abrupfly or passing them on to the rehabs they collude or passing them on to the remain they collade with. The limit on ops is usually 90 tablels, and if you use an op that shares the same mail-order pharmacy as your last op before the 25-day legal limit, your order will be bounced. In addition, it becomes cost-prohibitive to go to too many ops. Since ops are cheaper, safer, and easier to use than street-corner deale they avoid all Medicald fraud or drug dealing criminality, and provide a legitimate prescription bottle if a drug test becomes necessary. It's less than a shock to learn that many of the same doctors' names turn up on bottles for different ops; some of the more courteous and obliging have earned word-of-mouth fame. The ops have put a great many street dealers out of business, in the long run, you're paying \$1.25 to \$2.50 for a pill a dealer would price at \$5 to \$6, without risk of arrest, burn, or no-show.

It's a free country, and that extends to choosing what medical technique is best for you, be it holistic, acupuncture, or pharmin centical. The ops are performing a necessary service. Perhaps they're the first step toward the British system, in which many typical mi-nor narcotic remedies are available over the counter and heroin is a legal drug for those who decide to live out their lives on it. Ops have gotten health care for the uninsured They've cut into the business of the kind of call lous doctor who'll tell someone to take Adril for a broken rib. They've even reduced street-corner drug dealing. Whatever the shady ac-cusations, the bottom line is that ops have assuaged people's nerves and eased their pain in a war-torn, depressed America. U

Names have been changed to protect

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Bill at the last days of the Capri, 1995 (photo Michelle)



Bill Landis and Michelle Clifford, Newlyweds, Playland Photo Booth, Summer 1986

